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Panini COMICS

DOCTOR WHO

MAG

NEW SERIES

CAST & CREW UPDATE!

Maureen O'Brien

Sixties space-orphan Vicki breaks her silence at last!

Mark Gatiss

The Unquiet Dead writer goes back to the Fifties!

The NEW CREW

All the latest news on the Tenth Doctor and Rose's upcoming adventures – inside!

Attack of the Graske

Behind the scenes of BBCi's interactive extravaganza!

Celebrate DOCTOR WHO past and present, with a day of special guests, autographs, merchandise and much more!

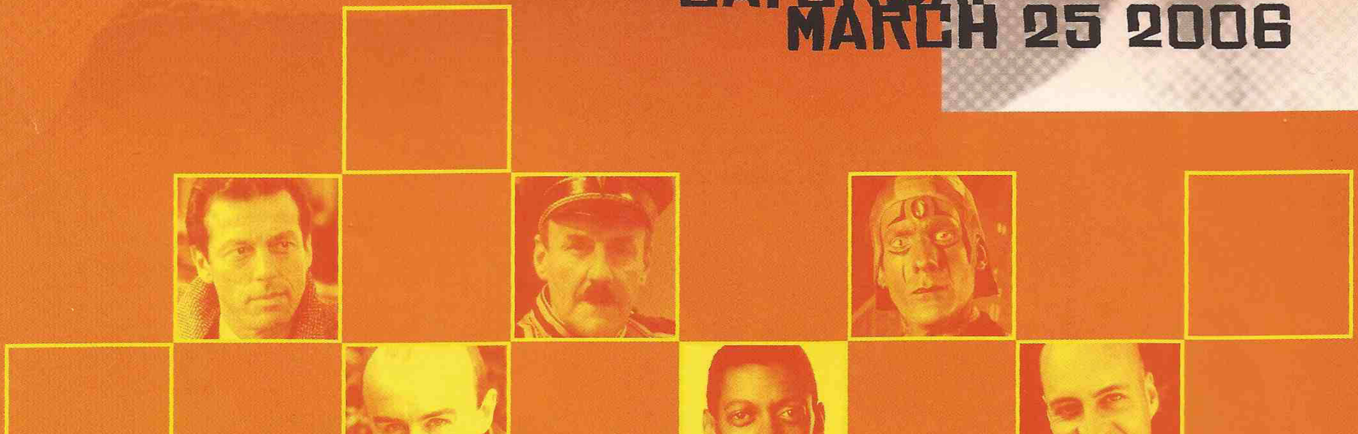
FIRST CONVENTION APPEARANCE

CAMILLE CODURI

BARKING ABBEY COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL

INVASION VI

SATURDAY MARCH 25 2006



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PULL TO OPEN

DOCTOR·WHO MAGAZINE

THIS MONTH, I HAVE BEEN MOSTLY MAKING MY first tangible contribution to actual bona-fide *Doctor Who*. One day I'll be in a **DWM** *Archive*! At last!

This is how the story goes. And don't laugh – it's proper, vital and important. Honestly. Pay attention!

It's a Friday afternoon, and I'm emailing Russell T Davies to double-check a question for *Matrix Data Bank* (the one about Pilot Fish – just telling you that so Andrew Pixley gets a bit of background colour). We get chatting about this, that and the other. Well, alright then, *Doctor Who*. And for some reason I end up telling him my one little niggle about Series One. And you will doubtless be fascinated by my insight, and jealous of the amazing banter I share with Russell, as we chew the fat of a Friday afternoon. Behold:

"Why, when the on-screen credits come up over the start of a new Doctor Who *episode, do they go:*

PRODUCER
Phil Collinson

It just seems all wrong – like the job is bigger than the man who's doing it! As well as looking top-heavy and making my designer-sense ache. Shouldn't it be:

Producer
PHIL COLLINSON

like it is on most other shows?"

Yes, readers. Old hawkeye here doesn't miss a trick, does he? Wake up at the back!

Anyway, Russell emails back: *"D'you know what, I completely agree with you!"* And then on Saturday morning I find I've been copied in on an email from Dame Julie Gardner to various important types at BBC Wales: *"Can we change the upfront credits (use of capital letters/sentence structure) please for Series 2 and beyond?"* Well stone me! And at the top, a little message from Russell: *"Here you go, see your hidden power? So mote it be!"*

So there you have it, a massive change wrought by yours truly. Bow down before me oh planets! Praise me for... Um, hello? Anyone? Where have you all gone? Come back! It's true! And interesting! No no no, don't buy *Stargate Magazine* instead... Oh drat.

Clay

EDITOR CLAYTON HICKMAN
DEPUTY EDITOR TOM SPILSBURY
DESIGN JAMES CLARKSON & PERI GODBOLD

PRODUCTION MARK IRVINE
MANAGING EDITOR ALAN O'KEEFE
MANAGING DIRECTOR MIKE RIDDELL

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GRASKE A SILLY QUESTION!

20 **DWM** travels to the planet Griffoth to get the lowdown on BBCi's recent interactive adventure. Find out why the autocue gathered dust, why Satellite 5 missed out on a guest appearance, and why no witches were burned during the making of *Attack of the Graske*...

12 INTERVIEW: MAUREEN O'BRIEN
For the first time ever, the actress behind 1960s space orphan Vicki grants **DWM** an in-depth interview about her big TV break...

26 SCRIPT DOCTORS: MARK GATISS
The Unquiet Dead author looks back over Series One and ahead to *The Idiot's Lantern*.

32 STRIP: *THE BETROTHAL OF SONTAR*
Part Two: The Doctor and Snathe have an appointment with destiny as our new comic strip continues.

48 FACT OF FICTION: *TIME AND THE RANI*
A look back at the last regeneration story of the classic series. They did things rather differently back then, as you'll see...

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GALLIFREY GUARDIAN

ALL THE LATEST NEWS FROM THE WORLDS OF **DOCTOR WHO**...

SERIES TWO

YOUR AT-A-GLANCE GUIDE

CAST

The Doctor	DAVID TENNANT
Rose Tyler	BILLIE PIPER
Mickey Smith	NOEL CLARKE
Jackie Tyler	CAMILLE CODURI

CREDITS

Executive Producers	JULIE GARDNER
	RUSSELL T DAVIES
Producer	PHIL COLLINSON
Associate Producer	HELEN VALLIS
Script Editors	HELEN RAYNOR
	SIMON WINSTONE
Director of Photography	ERNIE VINCZE
	RORY TAYLOR (Eps 2 & 4)
Casting Director	ANDY PRYOR
Production Manager	TRACIE SIMPSON
Production Designer	EDWARD THOMAS
Visual Effects	MILLTV
Special Make-Up and Prosthetics	NEILL GORTON
Models and Miniatures	MIKE TUCKER
Costume Designer	LOUISE PAGE
Make-Up	SHEELAGH WELLS
Incidental Music	MURRAY GOLD

EPISODES

EPISODE 1:

New Earth

Written by	RUSSELL T DAVIES
Directed by	JAMES HAWES

Cassandra	ZOË WANAMAKER
The Duke	MICHAEL FITZGERALD
Clovis	LUCY ROBINSON
The Matron	DONA CROLL
The Sister	ADJOA ANDOH
The Novice	ANNA HOPE
Chip	SEAN GALLAGHER

EPISODE 2:

Tooth and Claw

Written by	RUSSELL T DAVIES
Directed by	EUROS LYN

Queen Victoria	PAULINE COLLINS
Father Angelo	IAN HANMORE
Isobel	MICHELLE DUNCAN
Reynolds	JAMIE SIVES
The Steward	RON DONACHIE
The Host	TOM SMITH
Flora	RUTH MILNE
Robert	DEREK RIDDELL

EPISODE 3:

School Reunion

Written by	TOBY WHITHOUSE
Directed by	JAMES HAWES

Casting for Block Four announced as Episodes 7 and 11 begin shooting in Cardiff

FOUR CAST...

AS PRODUCTION ON THE NEW series of *Doctor Who* enters its fourth recording block, the production team has announced that Maureen Lipman will be playing an important role in Episode 7, *The Idiot's Lantern* by Mark Gatiss.

Maureen has enjoyed a long and succesful career in film and television. Among her most famous credits are *Agony* (1979), *Educating Rita* (1983), *Oklahoma!* (1999), *The Pianist* (2002), *Coronation Street* (2002), *Jonathan Creek* (2003), *Standing Room Only* (2004), and *The Fugitives* (2005, pictured right) – and to a generation she was Beattie in the legendary British Telecom adverts of the 1980s!

Producer Phil Collinson tells **DWM**, "What a coup! I'm happy to say that Maureen read the script and loved it instantly. Her run in the West End is still continuing, but we've had enough advance warning to schedule niftily around that. But in a cold, grey January, it's a lift and a boost for the whole cast and crew to see *Doctor Who* continuing to attract such massive talent. Maureen's part is very different to anything you might have seen her playing before – the Doctor and Rose are certainly never going to forget it!"

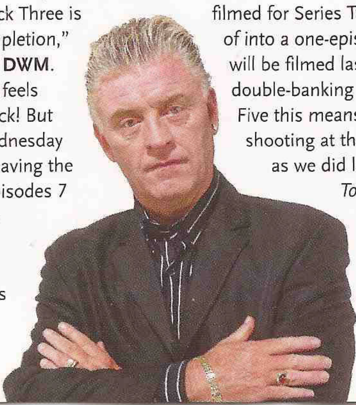
Also cast for episodes in Block Four are Edna Doré (most famous as Mo Butcher in *EastEnders*) playing Maeve and Nina Sosanya as Trish. Phil Collinson says, "This is something of a reunion, because Nina worked with David on *Casanova*, where she played a cross-dressing castrato, and then with Billie on *Much Ado About Nothing*, where she played Hero's newsroom colleague. So now we've closed the triangle, and as a result, it's a very happy set! We've actually wanted Nina to be in *Doctor Who* for ages now, and this part just fits perfectly."

Other new cast members confirmed are Abdul Salis as Kel, Abisola Agbaje as Chloe, and Christopher Driscoll as Security Guard.

"At the time of writing, filming on the mammoth Block Three is finally nearing completion," Phil Collinson tells **DWM**. "It feels endless, it feels like the Infinity Block! But on the night of Wednesday January 18, we're having the readthrough for Episodes 7 and 11, and then a day's rehearsal for the principal cast and [director] Euros Lyn on Thursday 19, and then we're off, into a new Block at last!

"At the same time, Block Five is starting pre-production," Collinson continues. "That consists of two episodes to be directed by James Strong. We've been looking at James' work for some time, he's certainly a rising talent, with a keen appetite for new challenges. He directed the last two episodes of *Rocket Man*, which Julie Gardner exec'd, and I thought they were some of the best stuff of the whole series. It also turns out that James was a trainee at Granada Television in the mid-1990s, and when he expressed a specific interest in Drama, he was shown round the building by none other than Russell T Davies! So this was meant to be! We can't wait for James to start, with two scripts that are certainly unlike anything he's done before!"

PHIL ALSO TELLS US THAT PLANS are underway for the single remaining episode: "The final episode to be filmed for Series Two has been hived of into a one-episode block, which will be filmed last, with some double-banking alongside Block Five this means having two units shooting at the same time, just as we did last year with *Boom Town* and *The Empty Child*. It's a fairly straightforward process, made easier by tight scripting and a clever schedule!



"Meanwhile, in post-production... Graeme Harper is about to start editing his episodes, while the final mix for Episode 1, *New Earth*, took place on Friday 6 January. FX work has been completed on *The Girl in the Fireplace*, and Murray Gold is finishing the score, and that's due to be mixed and signed off on Friday 20 January. It's the time of year when finished episodes start piling in, I love it!"

MEANWHILE, RENOWNED TV psychic Derek Acorah (below left) has announced that he has taken a guest role as himself in the new series. "I've just filmed *Doctor Who*," Acorah told *Manchester Online*. "It's a bit of a mickey-take. The Doctor finds that spirits and ghosts have invaded the whole of the galaxy, so he gets me along to see what we can do about it. It's only a small part, but there's a bit of fun to it. I'm there saying, 'I might as well go now, they're all out there and I can't do anything about them. I'm redundant!"

Phil Collinson tells us, "This is a wonderful cameo appearance in a hugely entertaining sequence, and we're delighted that Derek was able to come down to Cardiff to join in the fun! Mind you, I was quite surprised, when we phoned him up to ask him to appear, that he hadn't seen it coming!"

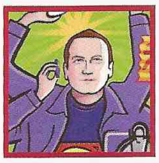
In other news, the title for Episode 5 has been confirmed as the ominous-sounding *Rise of the Cybermen*.

▶ p12

1960s companion Maureen O'Brien talks about life after Vicki...

▶ p20

We go behind the scenes on the interactive story *Attack of the Graske*!



▶ p66

Russell T Davies stalks Phil Collinso in this issue's *Production Notes*!

Deal is signed allowing new **Doctor Who** to be shown on the US Sci Fi Channel...

COMING TO AMERICA!

THE AMERICAN SCI FI CHANNEL and BBC Worldwide have announced a major licencing deal allowing all of the first 13 episodes of *Doctor Who* starring Christopher Eccleston and Billie Piper to be screened in the United States of America. The deal allows the Sci Fi Channel to show the first series of 13 episodes, with an option for further series. The run will begin in March, with the show scheduled to run on Friday nights at 9.00pm.

Doctor Who's executive producer Russell T Davies tells us, "We've actually known about this deal since before Christmas, so it's been quite exciting, keeping it quiet and preparing for the big announcement! Julie Gardner flew out to New York in mid-December to meet with the Sci Fi Channel, and the whole team here is delighted that the deal has finally gone ahead. It's a great partnership with a big, influential channel, which has a massive reach in the States. So it's fingers crossed for March!"

As a result of this announcement, it has been confirmed that the American edition of the DVD box set will now be released on 4 July 2006, to capatilise on the exposure gained from the TV broadcast.

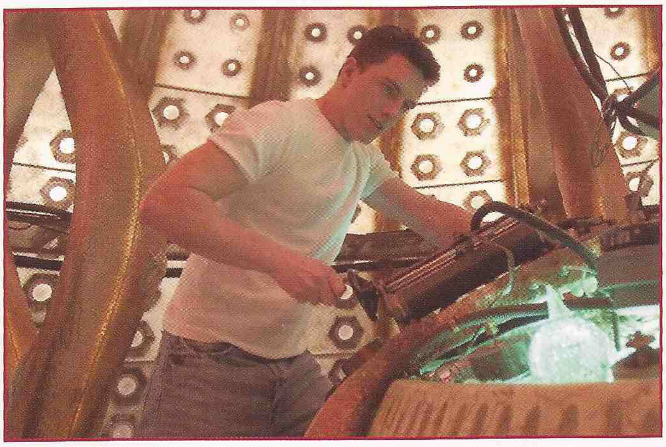
The USA is the latest of many countries to have bought the rights to show the new *Doctor Who* series. The show is a co-production with CBC in Canada and has also been sold to Germany (Pro Sieben), Australia (ABC), New Zealand (Prime Time), France (France 4), Spain and Portugal (People & Arts), South Korea (KBS, Channel 2), Denmark (Danmarks Radio), Sweden (SVT), Holland (NOS, Channel 3), Italy (Canal Jimmy), Finland (YLE) and Norway (NRK).

Production on BBC Wales' **Doctor Who** spin-off series gathers pace...

TORCHWOOD TALES!

WHILE DOCTOR WHO CONTINUES shooting in Cardiff, plans are well underway on the spin-off series, *Torchwood*, which stars John Barrowman as Captain Jack Harkness.

Russell T Davies tells **DWM**, "Production has started on *Torchwood*, though the proper pre-production is still a few weeks off – this is just the preparatory period in which we can lay the groundwork. James Hawes has been having such a good time, directing Andrew Davies' drama for BBC Wales about the Lady Chatterley obscenity trial, that he's decided directing is his greatest passion, and as a result, he's stepped down as producer of *Torchwood*.



"Knowing sci-fi fans as I do, again, I'd say, keep calm – this is perfectly normal in the build up to production, it happens on every other drama in the world – it's only on sci-fi dramas that these things get seen as dramatic events! As of today – Thursday 12 January – Julie and I have appointed the new producer, and we're very excited to have him on board, but we'll wait until the ink is dry on the contract before any announcements. And we must plan what to work on next with the lovely James!

"But work on the series proper has begun in earnest. On the Design team, Edward Thomas has moved Matt Savage from *Doctor Who* to *Torchwood*, and the first designs are already being signed off. Next week, we're holding the first preliminary auditions for the main cast. Helen Raynor has come on board as Script Editor, alongside Brian Minchin. And on Wednesday 4 January, an all-day meeting was held in Cardiff with Julie, myself, Helen, Brian and Chris Chibnall, to thrash out stories for the whole series. Over the following two days, we met with all the series writers – including, as announced, the legendary PJ Hammond! Plus a number of other names – some brand new, some familiar, and some surprises. But we're not announcing them yet, if only because such an announcement means that those writers then have other sci-fi magazines turning up at their door, or their agent's, demanding an interview. So, tough! They're busy writing, not chatting, so you'll have to wait! But it's an exciting time, and believe me, Julie's plans for the extension of BBC Wales drama are only just beginning!"

DOCTOR·WHO CONFIDENTIAL

AS PRODUCTION CONTINUES on *Doctor Who* itself, the BBC Three team has been hard at work on the second series of *Doctor Who Confidential*. We hope to have more detail about the content of the episodes shortly, but in the meantime producer Gillane Seaborne has revealed to us the titles for the first four episodes. They are:

Episode 1 **NEW NEW DOCTOR**
Episode 2 **FEAR FACTOR**
Episode 3 **FRIENDS REUNITED**
Episode 4 **FROM SCRIPT TO SCREEN**

Sarah Jane Smith	ELISABETH SLADEN
Voice of K9	JOHN LEESON
Mr Finch	ANTHONY HEAD
Mr Wagner	EUGENE WASHINGTON
Kenny	JOE PICKLEY
Melissa	LUCINDA DRYZEK
Nina	HEATHER CAMERON
Luke	BENJAMIN SMITH
Milo	CLEM TIBBER
Also co-starring	ROD ARTHUR
	CAROLINE BERRY

EPISODE 4:

The Girl in the Fireplace

Written by	STEVEN MOFFAT
Directed by	EUROS LYN

Madame de Pompadour	SOPHIA MYLES
Louis	BEN TURNER
Young Girl	JESSICA ATKINS
Katherine	ANGEL COULBY

EPISODES 5 & 6:

Rise of the Cybermen / TBA

Written by	TOM MacRAE
Directed by	GRAEME HARPER

Cybermen Voices	NICHOLAS BRIGGS
Pete Tyler	SHAUN DINGWALL
John Lumic	ROGER LLOYD-PACK
Jake Simmonds	ANDREW HAYDEN-SMITH
Mr Crane	COLIN SPAULL
The President	DON WARRINGTON
Mrs Moore	HELEN GRIFFIN

EPISODE 7:

The Idiot's Lantern

Written by	MARK GATISS
Directed by	EUROS LYN

Co-starring	MAUREEN LIPMAN

EPISODES 8 & 9:

TBA / The Satan Pit

Written by	MATT JONES
Directed by	TBA

EPISODE 10:

TBA

Written by	RUSSELL T DAVIES
Directed by	TBA

EPISODE 11:

TBA

Written by	MATTHEW GRAHAM
Directed by	EUROS LYN

EPISODES 12 & 13:

Army of Ghosts / Doomsday

Written by	RUSSELL T DAVIES
Directed by	TBA

Also starring in the series: Tracy-Ann Oberman, Mona Hammond, Raji James, Hadley Fraser, Oliver Mellor, Rachel Webster, David Warwick, Maddi Cryer, Kyoko Morita, Andrew Ufondu, Takako Akashi, Hajaz Akram, Anthony Debaeck, Paul Fields, Edna Doré, Nina Sosyana, Abdul Salis, Abisola Agbaje and Christopher Driscoll.

Doctor Who is a BBC Wales production for BBC One. 13x45-minute episodes for broadcast on Saturdays in Spring/Summer 2006. Story order and titles are subject to change.

OTHER NEWS

NEW WHO ON A BIG SCREEN!

Where will *you* be watching *New Earth*? After last year's successful fan launch party of *Rose* last March, organiser – and *Doctor Who Weekly* legend – J Jeremy Bentham is organising another event for the start of the forthcoming new series. If you're 18 or over, you could be among the hundreds of people at the London launch night celebration party – watching the new series opener, plus the first episode of *Doctor Who Confidential*, live on big-screen plasma screens with full Surround Sound.

A cash bar and a full food menu will be available throughout the afternoon and evening, plus, from 10.00pm onwards, there will be free access to the night club event.

100 tickets for this 4pm-until-late event, in central London, have been set aside for this free-to-enter prize draw, exclusive to readers of **DWM**. To enter the draw, just send a postcard stating your full name, address, a daytime contact number and the number of tickets requested (maximum of two) to: DW Launch Party Draw, 13 Northfield Road, Boreham Wood, Herts, WD6 5AE.

The draw will take place three weeks before the confirmed series launch date. Winners will be notified by post during the following week. Due to licensing laws, all winners and guests must be 18 years or older, and there will be no admission without a valid ticket.

GO GRAPHIC!

DWM is pleased to announce two new publications. The next **DWM** *Special Edition* will be *Ninth Doctor Collected Comics* and will feature the complete **DWM** comic strip adventures of Chris Eccleston's Doctor; *The Love Invasion*, *Art Attack*, *The Cruel Sea*, *A Groatsworth of Wit* and *Mr Nobody*. The issue will go on sale in April.

Coming in early Autumn is a new hardback, the *Doctor Who Storybook 2007*. This 84-page volume will feature seven brand-new illustrated stories from the writers of the TV series, plus a 15-page comic strip from Scott Gray. The dust-jacketed book, with a new cover from Alister Pearson, retails at £7.99.

I AM A DALEK!

DOCTOR WHO
I am a Dalek

Gareth Roberts' 'Quick Reads' novel [see last issue's *Gallifrey Guardian*] has been confirmed as the intriguingly-titled *I Am a Dalek*. The novel is due to go on sale in mid-May priced £2.99.

Meanwhile, BBC Audiobooks has revealed that it will be simultaneously releasing abridged 'talking books' versions of the next three *Doctor Who* novels later this spring; *The Feast of the Drowned* by Stephen Cole, *The Resurrection Casket* by Justin Richards, and *The Stone Rose* by Jacqueline Rayner. More news on these next issue.

BBC DVD confirms further **Doctor Who** releases for March and May...

GENESIS HITS DVD!

BBC DVD AND 2 ENTERTAIN HAVE CONFIRMED to **DWM** that the next *Doctor Who* DVD release will be 1975's *Genesis of the Daleks*, starring Tom Baker as the Doctor. The six-part serial, which introduced Davros, the evil creator of the Daleks, sees the Doctor on a mission for the Time Lords, to try to avert the Daleks' creation.

The story will be released as a double-DVD set, with the first disc carrying the six episodes, and the second containing an array of bonus features. A commentary track featuring Tom Baker, Elisabeth Sladen (Sarah Jane Smith), Peter Miles (Nyder) and director David Maloney accompanies all six episodes, while the second disc features two brand new documentaries.

Genesis of a Classic is a 62-minute feature in which actors and members of the production team recall working on the story. The second documentary is *The Dalek Tapes*, which is narrated by actor Terry Molloy who played Davros in later stories, following in the footsteps of the original actor, Michael Wisher. This feature tells the story of *Doctor Who*'s most enduring villains, providing a history of the creatures' appearances in the series, along with rare footage from programmes such as *Blue Peter* and *Vision On*.

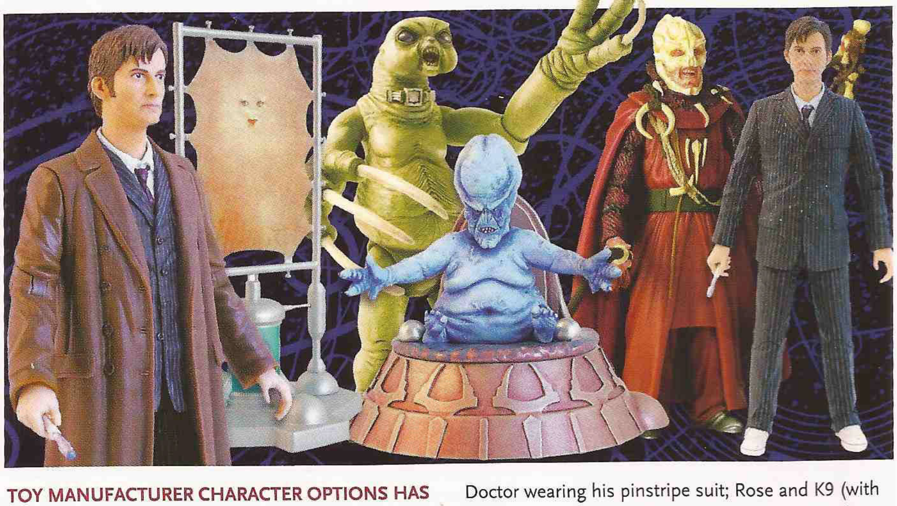
The set also includes a separate item from a 1975 edition of *Blue Peter*, which looks at a collection of *Doctor Who* models built by a viewer. Also included are off-air continuity announcements, a photo gallery and production notes, and PDFs of the 1976 *Doctor Who Annual* and *Radio Times* billings, which can be accessed by PC and Mac users.

Genesis of the Daleks is tentatively on the release schedules for 27 March priced £19.99. Meanwhile the 1970 story *Inferno*, which stars Jon Pertwee as the Doctor, is set to follow *Genesis* into the shops on 29 May. We hope to have more information about that release next issue.

Finally, 2 Entertain has confirmed that David Tennant's first series will be released across five volumes over the spring, summer and autumn, following the pattern established by last year's Christopher Eccleston series. As with last year's releases, these volumes will be 'vanilla' editions featuring the episodes alone, while a complete box set full of extra material will follow in the run-up to Christmas. The first volume will include *The Christmas Invasion* and *New Earth*, with the remaining four volumes each containing three further episodes.

Character Options reveals additions to 2006's toy range...

MINIATURE MENACE!

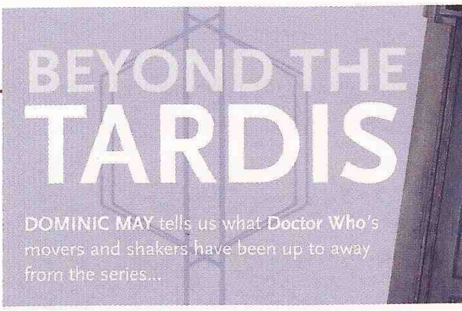


TOY MANUFACTURER CHARACTER OPTIONS HAS added several new products to its release schedule for 2006.

Additions to the 12" range will be an articulated Tenth Doctor doll, and an articulated Cyberman. New figures in the 5" range will include the Sycorax leader; Cassandra (with three spider-bots); the Moxx of Balhoon (with two spider-bots); the Tenth Doctor with long coat and sonic screwdriver; the Tenth Doctor wearing his pinstripe suit; Rose and K9 (with removable service panel); a Slitheen; and several Cybermen figures.

There are also plans for a radio-control K9 with Tenth Doctor, a TARDIS playset with sounds and SFX, Cyberman voice changer helmet with speech and SFX, and a Cyberman animatronic roomguard.

DWM will have more details on these products and their release dates shortly.



BEYOND THE TARDIS

DOMINIC MAY tells us what **Doctor Who**'s movers and shakers have been up to away from the series...

TENNANT'S AN OLD ROMANTIC

On 21 January **David Tennant** featured as eighteenth-century philosopher Jean-Jacques Rousseau, an inspiration for the French Revolution, in Part One of BBC Two's three-part *The Romantics*, written and presented by Peter Ackroyd, about the English Romantic poets, which also included theatre Doctor **Trevor Martin**. An effect akin to *The Christmas Invasion*'s regeneration energy was utilised as Tennant appeared. On 16 December he recorded a guest appearance on BBC Two's *Ready Steady Cook* with his father and was seen on Channel 4's *The Big Fat Quiz of the Year 2005* on Boxing Day. While working on ITV1's *Secret Smile* with Claire Goose, Tennant became involved with African water supply charity Water One. Tennant faces himself in *Broadcast*'s 2005 Best Drama Series category as both *Doctor Who* and *Blackpool* are nominated and he was voted sixth in *The Stage*'s Broadcasting Top 10 for 2005 with the number one being... a **Russell T** someone or other!

JACK AND MEL ICE DANCE!

John Barrowman and **Bonnie Langford** are among the contestants of ITV1's *Dancing on Ice*, which launched on 14 January, partly clashing with Barrowman's *The Sound of Musicals* on BBC One. Barrowman was also on ice during BBC One's *New Year Live* chatting to Natasha Kaplinsky, while his *Cinderella* pantomime broke the Wimbledon Theatre's box office record over two weeks before the end of its run.

ECCLESTON'S KIT OFF

Christopher Eccleston was all set to star as playwright Christopher 'Kit' Marlow in *The School of Night* by Peter Whelan at London's Comedy Theatre for a 22-week run from mid February, when without explanation it was suddenly announced the production had been cancelled. A statement on behalf of the producers claimed they are discussing other projects with Eccleston. Before Christmas he made a fact finding visit to tsunami-hit Banda Aceh in Indonesia on behalf of the Red Cross.

CASTING FOR MOFFAT'S JEKYLL

James Nesbitt will play the lead in **Steven Moffat**'s modern reworking of *Jekyll* for BBC One. Moffat describes his take on the tale, set in 2006, as "somewhere between a modern horror story and *The Odd Couple*." Filming commences in September with Moffat also an executive producer alongside mother-in-law Beryl Vertue. According to Jane Tranter, "Steven's Jekyll takes a legendary story and places it firmly in the modern world. It will be high concept, intelligent and utterly engrossing as we focus on a man whose life is literally split in half."

DAYTIME COLIN

Colin Baker's appearance in daytime soap opera *Doctors* is scheduled for early in March, in which he plays Charles Dillon in *Honourable Gentlemen*. His *Afternoon Play*, *Your Mother Should Know*, where he played the Judge, was broadcast in January.

McGANN AT SEA

The third series of BBC One's paranormal drama *Sea of Souls* culminates on 11 February with a guest appearance by **Paul McGann** as a "charismatic, yet sinister, businessman embroiled in black magic."

WINTER ON ITV1

ITV1's new season includes **Peter Davison** back as Bill Shore in Series Two of *Distant Shores*; *Marple* featuring *Who* alumni: **Bonnie Langford** in *By the Pricking of My Thumbs* and **Paul McGann** with **Sophia Myles** in *Sleeping Murder*; *Midsomer Murders* with **Simon Callow**, **Tom Georgeson** and **Elizabeth Spriggs**; *Northern Lights* starring **Mark Benton**.

DID YOU CATCH?

Jean Marsh on *Upstairs Downstairs – Must See TV* and as Violet Sidney in *Julian Fellowes Investigates*; the **Toby Whithouse**'s episode of *Hotel Babylon*; **Stephen Fry** narrating *The 50 Greatest Comedy Films* and presenting *The Joy of Gibberish*; *Resurrection of the Daleks*' **Rula Lenska** on *Celebrity Big Brother*; **Murray Gold** on *Blue Peter*.

OBITUARY

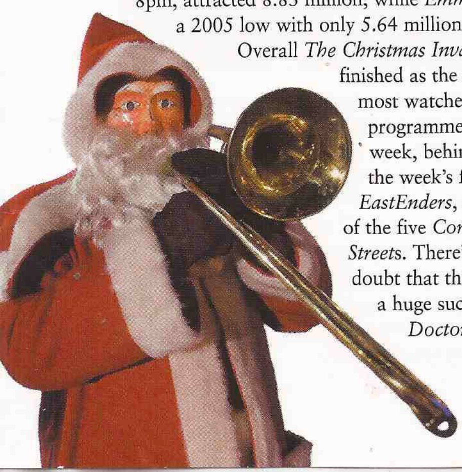
John Woodnutt, who starred in four *Doctor Who* serials, died recently aged 81. A tribute will appear next issue. **Joseph Furst**, who as Professor Zaroff uttered that immortal mad scientist cliff-hanger line "Nuzzink in ze vorld can schtop me now!" in *The Underwater Menace*, died on 29 November, aged 89.

PUBLIC IMAGE

DOCTOR WHO CAPPED OFF A MEMORABLE 2005 by attracting a massive 9.84 million viewers on Christmas Day – a total only beaten on the night by the 9pm edition of *EastEnders* which had 10.60 million. *The Christmas Invasion* attracted an incredible 44% of the available audience, easily eclipsing its direct competition, ITV1's *Who Wants to be a Millionaire Celebrity* which gained 5.80 million (26%). Better still, *Doctor Who* managed a better Christmas Day rating than either of ITV1's big soap operas – *Coronation Street*, shown at 8pm, attracted 8.83 million, while *Emmerdale* hit a 2005 low with only 5.64 million at 6pm.

Overall *The Christmas Invasion* finished as the ninth most watched programme for the week, behind four of the week's five *EastEnders*, and four of the five *Coronation Streets*. There's no doubt that this result is a huge success for *Doctor Who* – not only is it the biggest rating the show has enjoyed since *Rose* got 10.81 million in March (and before that you'd have to go back to Part One of *Time Flight* in 1982!), but it joins a select handful of only 13 episodes out of the 710 instalments broadcast over the past 42 years, to have made the week's Top Ten programmes.

The chart below shows how well *Doctor Who* has fared in comparison to other popular TV shows during 2005. As you can see, *Doctor Who* has quickly become one of BBC One's top series, far ahead of other mainstays of British drama such as *Casualty*, *Holby City* and *The Bill*. The individual success of *Rose* also placed *Doctor Who* as seventh on the individual episode chart. If the success of *The Christmas Invasion* is anything to go by, it looks like *Doctor Who* will continue its ratings domination into 2006... **TOM SPILSBURY**



2005'S TOP RATED TELEVISION SHOWS

TV SERIES (Channel)	**Average**	**Highest** (Date)	**Lowest** (Date)
1 **Coronation Street** (ITV1)	**11.09m**	**14.36m** (21 Feb)	**7.55m** (27 Apr)
2 **EastEnders** (BBC One)	**10.19m**	**14.34m** (18 Feb)	**6.76m** (22 Sep)
3 **I'm a Celebrity... Get Me Out of Here!** (ITV1)	**9.32m**	**12.35m** (5 Nov)	**7.51m** (7 Nov)
4 **The X Factor** (ITV1)	**8.73m**	**10.04m** (24 Sep)	**6.72m** (20 Aug)
5 **Doc Martin** (ITV1)	**8.69m**	**9.26m** (24 Nov)	**8.11m** (22 Dec)
6 **Emmerdale** (ITV1)	**8.63m**	**11.18m** (21 Feb)	**5.64m** (25 Dec)
7 **Heartbeat** (ITV1)	**8.61m**	**9.58m** (17 Apr)	**6.93m** (11 Sep)
8 **Midsomer Murders** (ITV1)	**8.57m**	**9.73m** (3 Apr)	**6.97m** (2 Oct)
9 **The Royal** (ITV1)	**8.38m**	**8.87m** (27 Feb)	**7.88m** (9 Jan)
10 **Strictly Come Dancing** (BBC One)	**8.32m**	**10.76m** (17 Dec)	**6.63m** (15 Oct)
11 **Dalziel and Pascoe** (BBC One)	**8.15m**	**9.22m** (20 Feb)	**7.48m** (7 Feb)
12 **Doctor Who** (BBC One)	**8.08m**	**10.81m** (26 Mar)	**6.81m** (11 Jun)
13 **Ant & Dec's Gameshow Marathon** (ITV1)	**8.04m**	**9.00m** (8 Oct)	**7.16m** (24 Sep)
14 **Little Britain** (BBC One)	**7.98m**	**10.17m** (17 Nov)	**6.93m** (15 Dec)
15 **Casualty** (BBC One)	**7.79m**	**9.24m** (1 Jan)	**6.35m** (18 Jun)
16 **Ant & Dec's Saturday Night Takeaway** (ITV1)	**7.54m**	**8.67m** (12 Mar)	**6.22m** (24 Dec)
17 **Wire in the Blood** (ITV1)	**7.53m**	**7.94m** (28 Feb)	**7.10m** (14 Mar)
18 **Life Begins** (BBC One)	**7.38m**	**8.62m** (16 Feb)	**6.38m** (30 Mar)
19 **Waking the Dead** (BBC One)	**7.30m**	**8.58m** (18 Sep)	**5.96m** (25 Sep)
20 **The Two Ronnies Sketchbook** (BBC One)	**7.04m**	**7.87m** (25 Dec)	**5.78m** (22 Apr)

Chart compiled by Tom Spilsbury. Source BARB. Programmes must have had at least three episodes in 2005 to qualify. Repeats are excluded.

COMING UP

Your full guide to where you can find **Doctor Who** on TV, audio, DVD and in print over the next month.

FEBRUARY

SUNDAY 5

TV Doctor Who: The Parting of the Ways by Russell T Davies [Ninth Doctor, Rose, Jack, Mickey and Jackie] *UKTV Gold*

SATURDAY 4

TV Doctor Who: The Trial of a Time Lord [9-12] by Pip and Jane Baker [Sixth Doctor and Mel] *UKTV Gold*

SUNDAY 5

TV Doctor Who: The Trial of a Time Lord [13-14] by Robert Holmes and Pip and Jane Baker [Sixth Doctor and Mel] *UKTV Gold*

SATURDAY 11

TV Doctor Who: The Happiness Patrol by Graeme Curry [Seventh Doctor and Ace] *UKTV Gold*

SATURDAY 12

TV Doctor Who: Silver Nemesis by Kevin Clarke [Seventh Doctor and Ace] *UKTV Gold*

SATURDAY 18

TV Doctor Who: The Face of Evil by Chris Boucher [Fourth Doctor and Leela] *UKTV Gold*

SATURDAY 19

TV Doctor Who: Spearhead from Space by Robert Holmes [Third Doctor and Liz] *UKTV Gold*

SATURDAY 25

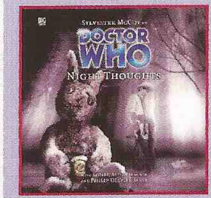
TV Doctor Who: Doctor Who and the Silurians by Malcolm Hulke [Third Doctor and Liz] *UKTV Gold*

SATURDAY 26

TV Doctor Who: The Ambassadors of Death by David Whitaker [Third Doctor and Liz] *UKTV Gold*

ALSO THIS MONTH

CD Doctor Who: The Reign of Terror by Dennis Spooner *BBC Audiobooks* £13.99



CD Doctor Who: Night Thoughts by Ed Young [Seventh Doctor, Ace and Hex] *Big Finish* £14.99 [See *Audio Adventures*, page 64]

CD Cyberman 1.4: Telos by Nicholas Briggs *Big Finish* £10.99

CD Sarah Jane Smith 2.2: Snow Blind by David Bishop *Big Finish* £10.99

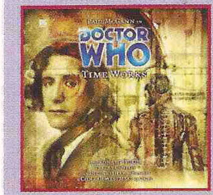
MARCH

THURSDAY 2

DWM Issue 367 *Panini Comics* £3.99

MONDAY 27

DVD Doctor Who: Genesis of the Daleks by Terry Nation [Fourth Doctor, Sarah and Harry] *BBC DVD* £19.99



ALSO THIS MONTH

CD Doctor Who: Time Works by Steve Lyons [Eighth Doctor] *Big Finish* £14.99

CD Sarah Jane Smith 2.3: Fatal Consequences by David Bishop *Big Finish* £10.99

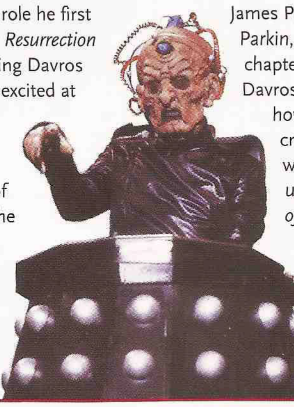
BOOK Doctor Who: Short Trips – Farewells Edited by Jacqueline Rayner *Big Finish* £14.99

All dates subject to change at short notice. Prices quoted are RRP only.

Exclusive! Terry Molloy returns as the Daleks' evil creator for Big Finish...

I, DAVROS, RETURN!

BIG FINISH PRODUCTIONS HAS CONFIRMED that this autumn will see the first release of a four-part audio mini-series starring the Daleks' evil creator Davros. Actor Terry Molloy will once again be breathing life into the character, a role he first played in the 1984 television story *Resurrection of the Daleks*. Delighted to be playing Davros once more, Molloy says, "I am so excited at the prospect of recording this series. *I, Davros* will be the definitive chronicle of the journey from man to monster to Creator of the Daleks and then Nemesis of the Doctor. With the superb team of script writers assembled and the guaranteed production values and excitement that Big Finish always provides, this is going to be one of the great Who moments of 2006. There is only one word that can possibly sum up my feelings at the news – *Excellent!*"



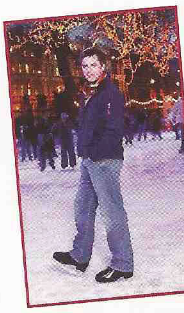
Each part of the *I, Davros* series will be written by a different author, confirmed as Gary Hopkins, James Parsons & Andrew Stirling-Brown, Lance Parkin, and Scott Alan Woodard. Each of these chapters will relate a significant episode in Davros' life that will unfold details of exactly how and why he became the notorious creator of the Daleks. The story will begin with Davros' early life as a teenager right up to the events of the TV story *Genesis of the Daleks*. Elements of Lance Parkin's earlier Big Finish audio *Davros* will also be woven into this new mini-series.

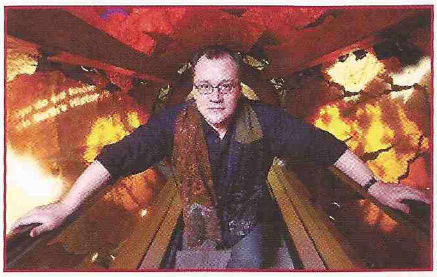
The series, which will be directed by Gary Russell, will begin its monthly releases in September 2006.

Doctor Who stars get in front of the cameras for **Gay Times** magazine...

HAVE A GAY OLD TIME!

FEBRUARY'S ISSUE OF BRITISH GAY MAGAZINE *Gay Times* is a special collector's edition, with the "most ambitious photo project undertaken by any gay magazine anywhere in the world" comprising 51 pages of original portraits of the UK's movers and shakers in the gay world. Among those who have taken part are Russell T Davies, John Barrowman and Mark Gatiss. The February issue of *Gay Times* should be on sale now at all the usual magazine retailers.





And on a (vaguely) related note, David Tennant has been voted the sexiest man in the world by readers of gay newspaper the *Pink Paper*, beating the likes of David Beckham. And quite right too!

Billie turns Victorian detective, and hosts C4's **The Friday Night Project**...

BILLIE'S NEW ROLES

THE BBC HAS ANNOUNCED THAT BILLIE PIPER will be taking the lead role in a new adaptation of Phillip Pullman's Sally Lockhart novels. The first adaptation, *The Ruby in the Smoke*, starts filming in May 2006, for a five-week shoot between Series Two and Three of *Doctor Who*.

Laura Mackie, the Head of BBC Drama Series and Serials, said "Billie Piper is an extremely versatile actress whose talent has deservedly been recognised by critics and audiences alike. Following on from her success as the Doctor's fearless companion Rose Tyler in *Doctor Who*, and the endearing Hero in *Much Ado About Nothing*, Billie is the perfect choice for bringing to life this engaging and fearless heroine."

The second book in the series of four, *The Shadow in the North*, will be filmed next year.

Meanwhile, Billie turned hostess on Friday 6 January, as the guest host of Channel Four's *Friday Night Project*, alongside comedians Justin Lee Collins and Alan Carr. Billie enjoyed geting up to all manner of 'trickery-pokery', as Assistant Producer Adam McLean tells us: "We could not have picked anyone better than Billie to launch our new-look show. She really bought into the warm spirit that Justin and Alan bring to the programme and I think they all had an absolute blast.

FRIDAY NIGHT NEWS

"The production team was always keen to have a few affectionate *Doctor Who* spoofs in the show and thanks to some wonderful costumes lent to us by fans, the '*Doctor Who* on Ice' item far exceeded anyone's expectations. And it's had a great response from viewers. Who knows – maybe it'll be accepted as canon in the same way *Dimensions in Time* isn't? Probably not actually..." DWM

Harriet Jones P.M.

MATRIX DATA BANK

YOUR **DOCTOR WHO** QUERIES ANSWERED BY **SORVAD**

The transdimensional mailbag is bursting with questions from nitpicke – sorry, *readers* – about *The Christmas Invasion*, so Sorvad will don his now-tattered Santa hat and give 'em a whirl....

CHRISTMAS CONUNDRUMS

JOHN GEDDES asks via email: *'The pilot fish came to Earth to knock out its defences and latched on to the Doctor's golden regeneration energy, and targeted him. But when the Sycorax turned up, they were surprised when Rose accidentally activated the TARDIS. How come?'* I think what we need to remember here is that the mysterious pilot fish have nothing to do with the Sycorax. They travel ahead of the Sycorax to take first dabs at a planet, but they are not part of the Sycorax operation. The Sycorax were presumably travelling to Earth anyway – the 'pilot fish' creatures latched on to the Doctor's aura and automatically targeted him, then backed off when they realised what they were up against. But they had no responsibility or concern to tell or warn the Sycorax about him; they are merely a parasitic organism out for themselves.

Another Christmas question from **HAYLEY STOPES**, also on email: *'Dear Sorvad. The Doctor is wearing Jackie's boyfriend's pyjamas in* The Christmas Invasion. *Who undressed the Doctor and put him into them? It can't be Jackie, as she wonders if the Doctor has two willies! And she'd know if she'd looked.'* This has to be one of my favourite *Matrix Data Bank* questions ever! The answer has to be Mickey, I think; it's a man's job. And thus Mickey becomes (probably) the only person in the series' entire history to have seen the Doctor naked! So only he knows the answer to Jackie's question...

DON'T FEAR THE REAPERS?

PAUL CARSON of Devizes wants to know: *'In* World War Three, *the Doctor says Harriet Jones will have three successive election victories as PM and become the architect of Britain's Golden Age. But in* The Christmas Invasion, *the Doctor seems to be bringing down her government – or at least Harriet personally – after only one election win. Has he changed future history?'* On the face of it, Paul, the answer would seem to be yes. As the Doctor tells Rose in *The Unquiet Dead* – and as he demonstrated to Sarah Jane way back in 1975's *Pyramids of Mars* – established history can be changed by the actions of time travellers. In the classic series, the Doctor was quite wary of doing this. He came down very hard on his fellow Time Lords the Monk and the Master for trying it. Perhaps his apparently casual attitude to altering Harriet's political career comes because the Time Lords are no longer around to feel his collar about it? But it raises an interesting question about his self-belief – as it's still hard to imagine him letting anybody else tinker with time in this fashion.

Paul goes on to ask *'If the Doctor has altered time, why don't the Reapers from* Father's Day *arrive to set things right?'* In *Father's Day*, the Reapers appear only because the Doctor and Rose have weakened the fabric of time by going to the scene of Pete's death twice. Meeting yourself is very dangerous, and it's Rose's interference at that weak point that brings in the Reapers – ironically, if she'd saved Pete the first time round, they would probably not have appeared. So the Doctor can change history – as he planned to do to help the Gelth in *The Unquiet Dead*, and as he appears to do in *The Christmas Invasion* – without being eaten by slavering great monsters!

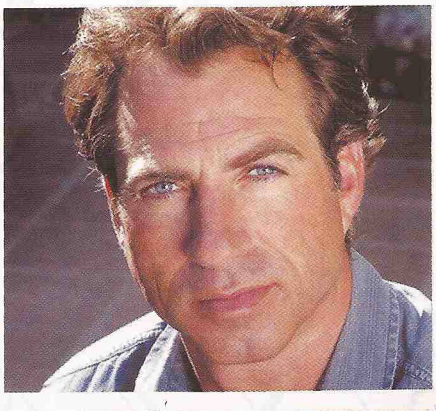
COMPANION PEACE

PAUL GETHIN of Doncaster has what he describes as a 'thorny question': *'What is it specifically that turns a character into a companion? Is it that they have to appear in multiple stories? In which case, are Sabalom Glitz (*Trial of a Time Lord *and* Dragonfire*) or Jackie Tyler a companion? Or is it that they have to actually travel in the TARDIS with the Doctor? If so, for how many stories? If one story isn't enough, why is Grace (from the 1996 TV Movie) considered a companion but Herbert from* Timelash *isn't? Is Captain Yates a companion but not Corporal Bell? Help!!!'* Calm down, Paul, and don't worry. Sorvad thinks he has the answer.

This should be simple enough – but as Paul points out, there are borderline cases. Captain Yates, for example, who appeared regularly as part of the 'UNIT family' of Jon Pertwee's era, never actually travelled in the TARDIS – and Jackie Tyler and Mickey have yet to (aside from a short hop for Mickey in *Rose*) – but they both appear in a number of stories as regulars, so they are 'companions' – or more strictly speaking, series regulars – by proxy. Corporal Bell appears in the background at UNIT HQ in two consecutive Jon Pertwee stories, so she isn't either. Grace Holloway is a very thorny case. Having made the frankly bizarre decision not to travel with the Doctor at the end of the TV Movie, and go to a disco or do her shopping or something instead, she shouldn't really be considered a companion. But she *feels* like she is – in exactly the way Herbert doesn't! As the TV Movie was a one-off, she's a companion in the same way that Pussy Galore is a Bond girl. Different rules apply. But other characters, such as Glitz, Alpha Centauri and Harriet Jones, don't make the list; they appear in more than one story, but they don't actually join the Doctor. And that, I think, is the important thing. Companions are those characters who travel in the TARDIS with – or assist the Doctor – regularly. Sorvad decrees that Katarina, Sara Kingdom and Adam, Liz Shaw, Benton, the Brigadier, Jackie, Mickey, and Mike Yates are all companions. But Herbert, Laurence Scarman and Duggan aren't. As for Grace – I think she is, but it's up to you!

THE VAN GORKUM ERA!

Still on the subject of the TV Movie, **VICTOR MURRAY** of Stourport-on-Severn writes: *'Dear Sorvad, please could you tell us more about the actor Harry Van Gorkum, who was a strong contender to play the Eighth Doctor in the 1996 TV Movie? I remember reading – I think in* **DWM** *– that Fox television preferred him to Paul McGann, and the producer had to fight to keep Paul as the Doctor.'* Harry is a British actor who moved to the States in the early 1990s and who has appeared in a variety of US films and TV shows, often as a posh, prickly Brit. Famous credits include *Friends, Charmed* and *Seinfeld*, plus a memorable turn as TV antiques valuer 'Porcelain Paul' in the *Will & Grace* episode *Tea And a Total Lack of Sympathy*. Movie credits include *Agent Cody Banks* and *Batman & Robin*. Here's a picture of the man himself. Just think, everybody – that could have been the Doctor! DWM



DWMAIL

DOCTOR WHO
UNDERCOVER INVASION

DWMAIL, Doctor Who Magazine,
Panini House, Coach and Horses Passage,
The Pantiles, Tunbridge Wells, Kent, TN2 5UJ

E-mail: dwm@panini.co.uk
(marked 'DWMail' in the subject line)

First up, it's your views on *The Christmas Invasion*. And it looks as though it's another winner with most of you...

> "With a new *Who* family to rival the Pertwee era, *The Christmas Invasion* was the best episode yet!"

CHRISTMAS PRESENT

December 25th 2005: The best day in the history of *Doctor Who*! I woke up to find the DVD box set, *The Shooting Scripts*, the *2006 Annual*, the 2006 Calendar and the Sonic Screwdriver under my Christmas tree. After watching the tantalising preview on the DVD boxset I settled down to watch *The Christmas Invasion*. It was absolutely fabulous! Epic, breathtaking and enthralling... surely the Sycorax have to rank as the scariest *Doctor Who* monsters ever. Billie Piper and co were great as usual, and David Tennant – what a Doctor he is going to make!

Attack of the Graske was great too – it was exciting to be involved in an adventure and to hear the Doctor say he would come and pick me up one day. Oh, it brought tears to my eyes!

MATTHEW TRINDER E-MAIL

Well done to *Doctor Who*'s marvellous production team for the fabulous Christmas special. Perhaps I'm gushing too much, but what with its killer Christmas trees, and a new *Who* family to rival the cosiness of UNIT in the Pertwee era (are Jackie and Mickey the new Benton and Yates?), I have to say, it was the best epsiode yet.

GEORGE ROSTOV E-MAIL

What can I say about the new Doctor? David Tennant gave a terrific performance. Tennant has achieved the impossible and made me completely accept there's life after Christopher Eccleston. He stole every scene he was in and gave a lot of light and shade to his character, with the dark, dramatic aspects sitting well with the energetic, funny, charming elements. All this in less than 30 minutes screen time.

IAIN BROWNLIE E-MAIL

Any doubts over David Tennant replacing Christopher Eccleston were dispelled on Christmas Day. David's Doctor is energetic, mischievous, witty, heroic and has a surprisingly ruthless streak. The scenes where he sends the Sycorax leader tumbling to his death, and then undermines Harriet Jones' government were unexpected. If this is the ruthless streak that Tennant has mentioned then it promises to be an intriguing portrayal.

DAVID ROBERTS YORK

Having just watched *The Christmas Invasion* for the third time since Christmas Day (I'm writing on New Year's Eve!) I can honestly say that next to *The Parting of the Ways*, it is the best *Doctor Who* I've ever seen. David Tennant was great, and it was so good to see the Doctor properly saving the day by fighting the baddie and figuring stuff out and totally out-cooling everyone in sight. And when he said "It is going to be... fantastic!" at the end, well, what a great tribute to Christopher Eccleston. Roll on the next series – I can't wait for the Cybermen and Sarah and K9, and to see how Rose gets on with the new Doctor.

SIMON SMITH E-MAIL

Well, it's been and gone now, and sadly I have to say that *The Christmas Invasion* didn't live up to the hype. The special effects were as stunning as ever, particularly the *Independence Day*-style scene of the Sycorax ship over London. This, however, could not disguise the fact that there just wasn't enough plot to go round. While Billie Piper continued to shine as Rose, she did seem a little lost in this strangely Doctor-lite episode. The jury is still out, as far as I'm concerned, over David Tennant, although I don't think it's really fair to judge any actor during a regeneration episode. I mean, look at *Robot* or *Time and the Rani*!

Not to say it was *all* bad, but the *Lord of the Rings*-style ending was awful. Still, this was more than made up for by the lovely coda, with the Doctor and Rose trying to decide where to go next. I can't wait!

PAUL BOWLER LOWESTOFT

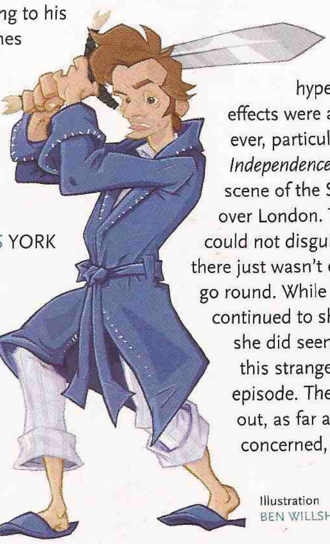


Illustration
BEN WILLSHER

The Christmas Invasion was funny, it was emotional, it was scary, it was action-packed and all in just 60 minutes. In my opinion, huge praise must go to the Doctor himself – David Tennant. He took a difficult role and made it his own. I just hope he will do a second series after the one starting this spring. Finally, any chance that Mickey could be a companion? He really is starting to prove himself as a member of the TARDIS crew.

DANIEL HUGHES E-MAIL

As my family and friends continue to debate the rights and wrongs of the Doctor's confrontation with Harriet Jones at the end of *The Christmas Invasion*, one thing is clear to me... Penelope Wilton was *sensational* as the PM! Her delivery of the line concerning the Royal Family being "on the roof" proves how deserving both actress and character are of another return to *Doctor Who*. I was genuinely gutted by both Harriet's decision and also the Doctor's response. Was she right and the Doctor wrong? Surely the hero is not always right? I do hope Harriet gets the chance to return. Please!

PETER WILCOCK CHESHIRE

David Tennant came across as a superb Doctor. Rather than being an amalgamation of all nine previous Doctors, he seems to be doing his own thing and seems very natural and comfortable playing the Doctor. I think that this Doctor is going to touch a whole different range of people. No disrespect to Christopher Eccleston who has done a fine job, but you would have never seen his Doctor sitting down having Christmas dinner and pulling a cracker.

Even my wife, who is not a fan in the slightest, sat down to watch because she wanted to see what all the fuss was about. Even she smiled and said "that wasn't bad!" at the end.

Long live the Tenth Doctor!

KEVIN COLLINS BASILDON

For years I dreamt of what it would be like to have fresh *Doctor Who* on our screens, and this year I truly got the best Christmas present ever! I sat down on the sofa on Christmas night with a sherry and a mince pie to watch

We also heard from... **NICK MELLISH:** "Just wanted to write in a heartfelt congratulatory slap-on-the-back for the 28-page long feature on *The Christmas Invasion* [**DWM** 365], which really was a joy to read from start to finish. Surely the time has come for Benjamin Cook to have a gold statue erected in his image... no?" *Goodness, no! He'll be wanting to be paid next!* **PJ GALLEY:** "It's only been 16 years, *Coronation Street*, but *Who*'s the daddy now?" **H GALE:** "If possible, please could *Attack of the Graske* be on the next DVD box set?" **MARION CROMB:** "Why does everyone call the Doctor 'Doctor Who', when he's actually called the Doctor? Even the credits say 'Doctor Who'!" *Don't even go there, Marion! And finally,* **DARREN JONES:** "Bring back the Sontarans!" *Okay!*

the spectacular seasonal sensation that was *The Christmas Invasion*. It was beyond my wildest dreams – David was fab, and Russell's writing was spot on (as ever!), but the most exciting thing was seeing what was in store for the next series! Sarah Jane, K9, Cybermen... I nearly fell off my chair!

By the way, what was the name of the wonderful song that played over the sequence near the end?

PETER SHEWARD SOLIHULL

Doctor Who composer Murray Gold tells us that it's a composition called *Song for Ten*, and features Tim 'the Guitarist' Phillips on lead vocals, and Murray himself on backing vocals. So now you know! Now, two months on, and Mark Hulme's letter from **DWM** 364 is still causing a rumpus...

WHO'S IT FOR?

I had to respond to Mark Hulme's e-mail regarding kids taking over our beloved show. It's *great* to see young children doing what we did when we were children. It simply shows that Russell and the team pitched the programme exactly right.

I enjoy seeing children's drawings and their homemade Daleks, it just demonstrates the power and impact of the new series. Yes I entirely agree that we want to see plenty of the 'classic' series, but keep up the great work on the new series. It is the duty of all of us old farts to indoctrinate the youth of today. Lets not turn them away, let's welcome them!

MARK NUTTALL E-MAIL

I've been reading the magazine since issue one of *Doctor Who Weekly* – "Such a long time ago" as the new Doctor put it – and I've never felt moved to write in until now.

That letter in **DWM** 364, where the long-time reader bid you a not-so-fond farewell becuase he thought the new series has had a "detrimental effect" on the magazine... Well, he's entitled to his view... even if it is tosh. **DWM** has never been better. It has energy, enthusiasm and – dare I say it? – love on every page. Personally, I think it's wonderful that so many new fans – of different ages – are getting on board. I hope they, and I, will be around for your 50th anniversary year.

JOE MCKEE E-MAIL

It's essential that **DWM** has to reflect what is happening in the series 'now', especially when it is grabbing so many headlines and awards. That said, it's a shame that 'classic' *Doctor Who* is being shuffled off into **DWM** Special Editions, and is not reflected so much in **DWM** itself. *The Time Team*, *The Fact of Fiction* and *Off the Shelf* cannot, by their very nature, get under the skin of each story in the same way that an interview with a producer or actor can. Why not carry interviews with the old-time stalwarts to tie in with each DVD release?

CHRIS WINWOOD E-MAIL

I'm sure this will be one of many saccharine letters you get this month, but so what – you deserve them. Everyone is quick to say when things aren't to their own taste and we tend to take things for granted when they are. Well, I've been taking **DWM** for granted for many years now so it's about time I said a big Thank You; not only has it been a fantastic magazine through the years, it's never been better than it is now.

After all, we've had 15 years of articles about past Doctors and stories, but the new TV series is what's happening 'now' – and that's exactly where the magazine's focus should be.

NEIL SULLIVAN E-MAIL

This was the tip of the iceberg of letters we received following Mark's comments. So hopefully we're getting **DWM** right for most of you! And for those of you who like seeing what the kids have made, here's something from one of the, er, *older* children...

ICE WARRIOR!

Please find enclosed a picture of a snow Quark that I made a few days ago. It has been terrorising the neighbourhood since then, but has sadly begun to melt now.

IAN SNELL (34) DONCASTER

WHITHER SHADA?

Will the Time Team be watching the incomplete *Shada* after *The Horns of Nimon*, or will they head straight for *The Leisure Hive*?

BARRY MICHAEL FULHAM

Nope, sorry, no *Shada* for now. It's an untransmitted, unfinished 'work in progress' – viewers never saw *Shada* in 1980, so it doesn't seem right for the Time Team to view it here. There might be an argument to watch it at the end of the original run – which is basically when we all got to see it – but that might lead onto having to watch all the other video specials, like *Downtime* or *Shakedown* or *Summoned by Shadows*. Surely you wouldn't wish that on us?! *K9 & Company* on the other hand... *Ed.*

GHOSTS OF THE PAST

Cheers a billion, Sorvad! Now everyone on the Central Line thinks I'm a nutter after I was uncontrollably snorting with laughter at your *The Brand of Fear* article [**DWM** 364]! One point, though – how can you dismiss the Pertwee Annuals as, 'Not too bad'?! You think the Fourth Doctor is a bit out of character for making the odd sexist remark? That's *nothing*! I added the *1975 Annual* to my collection recently, and the Third Doctor gives Jo a big *SLAP* round the chops in each of the first *three* stories!

STUART MADDISON EALING

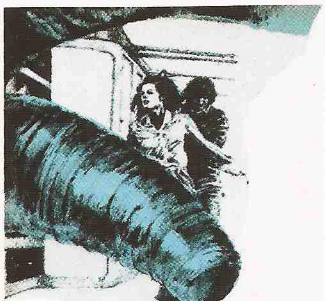
I was a bit puzzled with Barry Letts' comments about lack of control over the stories in the *Doctor Who Annuals* [**DWM** 364], as it was his suggestion that I submit stories in the 1970s. The production team thought the standard was quite low, and because I used to run serialised stories in the *Doctor Who Fan Club Newsletter*, they said why not submit some for the *Annual*?

I submitted two stories. The first, *The House That Jack Built*, was accepted, but the second, *The Seeds of Doom* (about pods that fall to earth, germinating into meat-eating plants that grow to giant size and finally get blasted to bits by UNIT. Hang on...!) was rejected. The reason given by World Distrbutors was that the then-script editor (Terrance Dicks) had turned it down as it was too similar to a storyline they were already planning!

KEITH MILLER EDINBURGH

Perhaps Sorvad could check out the story *Return of the Electrids* in the *1980 Annual* and let us know what he thinks is happening on page 52. How that particular illustration was passed for inclusion is anyone's guess...!

FREDDIE R ALDOUS E-MAIL



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DWM presents a no-holds-barred chat with Noel Clarke, looking back at Mickey's journey so far, and asking if he'll ever join the Doctor and Rose on their travels...

FREE CD!

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VENI VIDI VICKI

Back in 1965, **Maureen O'Brien** became the first new actress to join the regular *Doctor Who* cast, following the departure of Carole Ann Ford. In a rare interview, Maureen tells **Stuart Manning** why she's happy to leave Vicki in the past...

"I'M NOT NOSTALGIC AND I DON'T really like nostalgia," says Maureen O'Brien firmly, adding her signature to yet another photograph, before adding it to the stack on the table in front of her. "I don't like the past very much – I never want to return to the past." The time-travelling irony isn't lost on her, but with nostalgia now forming as a minor industry, perhaps it's not that incongruous.

We're in the green room at the November 2005 Dimensions convention in Stockton on Tees, where organisers and science-fiction retailers 10th Planet have succeeded in luring Maureen to her first ever *Doctor Who* convention. She's one of the show's only former regulars never to have attended a fan event, and having declined to appear at similar reunions for more than two decades, one senses a touch of resignation in finally accepting the invitation. So why the change of heart? "Selling my books, frankly," she admits, referring to her line of bestselling crime novels. "I would never have done one of these, had it not been for 10th Planet relentlessly talking me into it, over years and years of not taking no for an answer," she laughs. "I just originally said I don't do them, so no! I'm not interested in what I've done – I did it. *Doctor Who* was fascinating at the time, it was wonderful – but I live in the present. I don't really want to know about the past and, the older I get, the less I want to know."

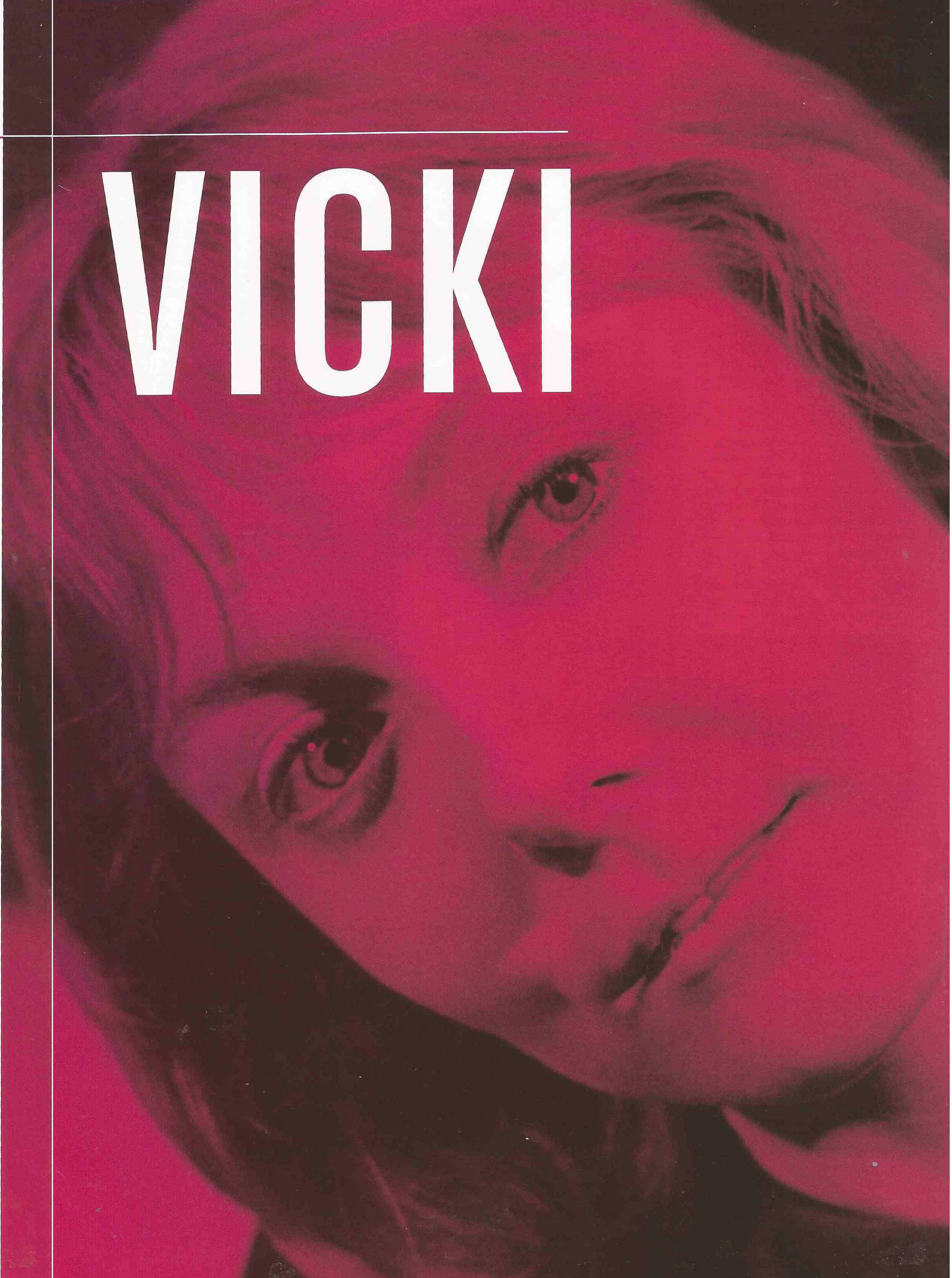
"I suppose Vicki wasn't all that bad actually. When I see the old episodes now I think she's quite a charming little creature..."

Doctor Who doesn't seem content to let its actors forget, and Maureen finally seems comfortable to reminisce about her year long-stint as Vicki, alongside William Hartnell as the First Doctor. Before landing the role, she had cut her teeth as an actress at the Everyman Theatre in her native Liverpool before landing the role.

"That was totally working class, totally left wing, it was totally up there on the battlements," she says with relish. A world away from mass-market television then? "The BBC was very middle class. The Everyman was about doing something because it was good – because the writing was good, it was an exciting idea, or it was just new. It was a different way of thinking."

Having never seen *Doctor Who* before, Maureen had firm first impressions. "From the beginning I thought of it as a children's show. I didn't know that it was this big cult thing." Perhaps confirming her impressions of *Doctor Who* as simple fare was her disappointment in Vicki's character. "It's difficult for a character to have any psychology when they've got no personality. I don't know that she had any!" she suggests, beginning to giggle. "I suppose she wasn't that bad, actually. When I see the old episodes now, I think she is quite a charming little creature."

Charming little creature Vicki was enlisted to the TARDIS ranks in late 1964, written as an inquisitive orphan from the far future. The new character filled the shoes of departing companion Carole Ann Ford, who had played the Doctor's granddaughter Susan. "I had no consciousness of the fact that I was coming into the show, and taking someone's place," Maureen confesses, "because I had never seen *Doctor Who* – I didn't watch television. I had no real idea of what a series was; that idea of something that went on and on and on, episode after episode. I remember Carole Ann Ford coming in to say good luck, and I thought that was awfully nice of her, but it didn't occur on me that I was taking over from someone. I didn't feel as though I was carrying a torch or anything. I do think they [the cast] probably missed Carole, though. They were very fond of her, I know, and they'd all started together. But they never made me ▶



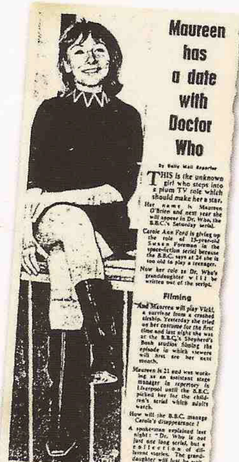
feel excluded – not at all. I think they may have found me a bit puzzling. I was an odd little thing.”

Entering an established cast was something that left her similarly undaunted: “Fitting into an ensemble is what you do all the time as an actor. You are in a company – you're playing your part, the other actors are playing theirs, you're working together to create something. That was just normal, that's the way I thought of it – I didn't think of it as anything different. I do now, but I don't think I realised. I don't think I knew anything back then, really.”

As a newcomer to television, Maureen found that the world of the BBC was one far less welcoming than she was used to from her background in theatre. “I got into the world of television and it all seemed very middle class, and very frightening. There was something much more ambitious, cold and selfish about television. You felt that it was about using and being used, and not so much about working together to create something. Although with our little *Doctor Who* family one did not have that feeling.”

▲ *Maureen with Koquillion, the not-so-alien villain from her first story,* ***The Rescue.***

◀ *With Jacqueline Hill, who played Barbara.*



Maureen has a date with Doctor Who

By Daily Mail Reporter

THIS is the unknown girl who steps into a plum TV role which should make her a star.

Her name is Maureen O'Brien and next year she will appear in Dr. Who, the B.B.C.'s Saturday serial.

Carole Ann Ford is giving up the role of 15-year-old Susan Foreman in the space-fiction serial because the B.B.C. says at 24 she is too old to play a teenager.

Now her role as Dr. Who's granddaughter will be written out of the script.

Filming

And Maureen will play Vicki, a survivor from a crashed airship. Yesterday she tried on her costume for the first time and last night she was at the B.B.C.'s Shepherd's Bush studios filming the episode in which viewers will first see her next month.

Maureen is 21 and was working as an assistant stage manager in repertory in Liverpool until the B.B.C. picked her for the children's serial which adults watch.

How will the B.B.C. manage Carole's disappearance?

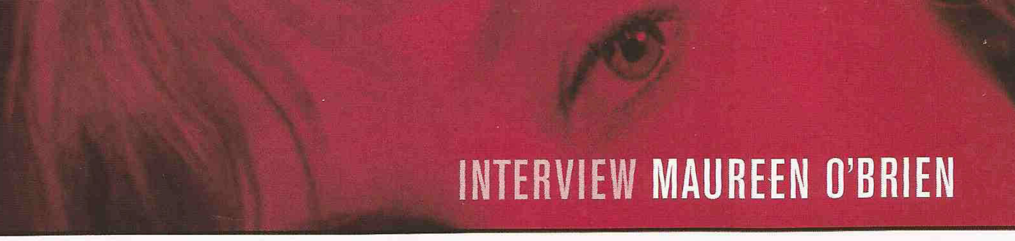
A spokesman explained last night: “Dr. Who is not just one long serial, but a collection of different stories. The granddaughter will just be written out of the next one.”

At the core of that *Doctor Who* ‘family’ was the show's original producer, Verity Lambert, who Maureen remembers with great respect. “Verity was someone I was in awe of. I was very impressed with her, though slightly scared too, being as young as I was. She was there at my screen test and was always very kind and supportive to me. I think she was the one who made *Doctor Who* the success it was. Even though she was our producer, she always managed to be very pleasant and laid back and, at the same time, be herself.”

Presumably it was quite unusual to see a female producer working in television at that time? “Unusual? I should think she was unique! Verity was totally committed to *Doctor Who*, and you never felt that she was treating it as a stepping stone to other things. I never knew her very well, but I would have liked to have known her better, I think.”

Maureen also has fond memories of the show's original star, William Hartnell. “He was wonderful,” she smiles. “He was the pivot – big and strong, like a tent-pole holding up the marquee. He was a pillar of strength because he knew exactly how it should be, exactly how it should go. At the same time, he was a jobbing actor, just like anyone else, and did his job, learned his lines… well, did his best to learn his lines…” she says, laughing as she corrects herself.

Indeed. William Hartnell's reputation for stumbling through his dialogue remains as legendary as his tempers on set. Was he a difficult actor to work with? “I would describe Bill as irascible,” suggests Maureen. “His bark was worse than his bite – not that I ever saw his bite, actually. He would have his little… Well, I suppose you'd call them tantrums. But it was harmless, and it sort of became my job to help laugh him out of his mood when it happened. I would never have described him as hot-headed, for instance. He would just snarl and bare those fangs of his,” she giggles. “He would literally snarl! But I always seemed to be able to make him see the funny side, and he was always willing to be laughed out of it.”



▲ *Maureen with William Hartnell (Dr Who), William Russell (Ian) and Jacqueline Hill (Barbara).*

Doctor Who also gave William Hartnell a welcome new focus for the final years of his career. "Bill saw it as his retirement job," she says. "He definitely saw it as his reward. It was the saving grace of him – it really was a kind of resurrection. He was so thrilled with it, because it just belonged to him."

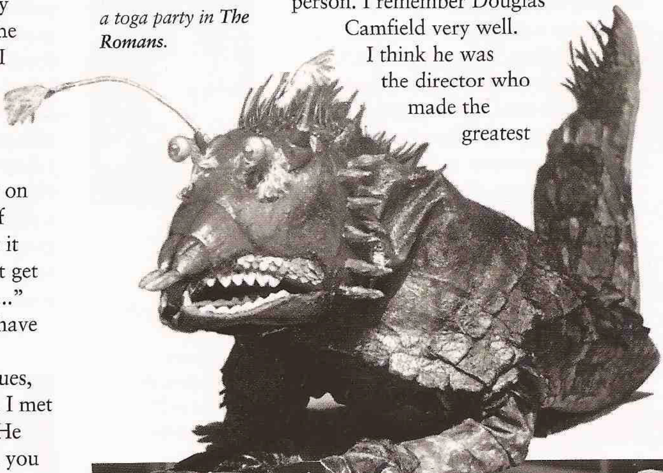
The series had a firm advocate in BBC Head of Drama Sydney Newman, a notoriously outspoken Canadian. "He was wonderful and very, very direct," Maureen enthuses, "but he could be quite brutal sometimes. I was a rather tough and angry young person – I wasn't really, inside, but I was, outside, with my kind of Liverpudian bravado. I remember meeting Sydney early on and being told, 'We're thinking of having you cut your hair and dye it black.' I said, 'Why don't you just get Carole Ann Ford back?' Actually..." she ponders, "I think that might have sealed my fate.

"Many years later," she continues, "when I was working in Canada, I met Sydney again, totally by chance. He said to my husband Michael, 'All you needed to be *Doctor Who*'s assistant is to have big tits and be able to scream on cue. Your wife had no tits and can only scream with motivation!' He was funny," she grins. "He then said, 'You're quite a good actress now,' so I said 'I always was, with a good script!'"

Her first few months on *Doctor Who* proved to be a period of education, as Maureen got to grips with her new role. "Because I had no respect at that time for television, I didn't understand why anyone was nervous. There was no audience, so why was anyone nervous before we did the recording on Saturday night? And so I learned in a very relaxed way to do half an hour of television every Saturday for a year. It's a fantastic thing for a young actor, to be able to see yourself and see what you're doing, and see the things you're doing wrong, things you're doing right, your mannerisms. You spend a lot of time ironing out the mannerisms that probably make you who you are – you don't know any better – but you do learn how television works, how to work with a camera and you just learn by doing it. I'm grateful to *Doctor Who* because it was a fantastic learning curve."

The show's directors were also provided valuable support to the cast. "No one had heard of a casting director in those days. When you went up for a role, you saw the director. The producer might pop in and have a little chat, but that was all. It was you and the director and the whole thing was in the director's hands. The director was a truly, utterly respected person. I remember Douglas Camfield very well. I think he was the director who made the greatest impression on me. He was very striking and dynamic as a person. I liked Richard Martin a lot, too. He had bright red hair and was a sort of 'beard and sandals' person – very intelligent and rather left wing, as I recall. All our directors seemed to strive to push themselves further, and of course *Doctor Who* was great for doing that."

"I would describe Bill as irascible. He would snarl and bare those fangs of his. But he was always willing to be laughed out of his moods."



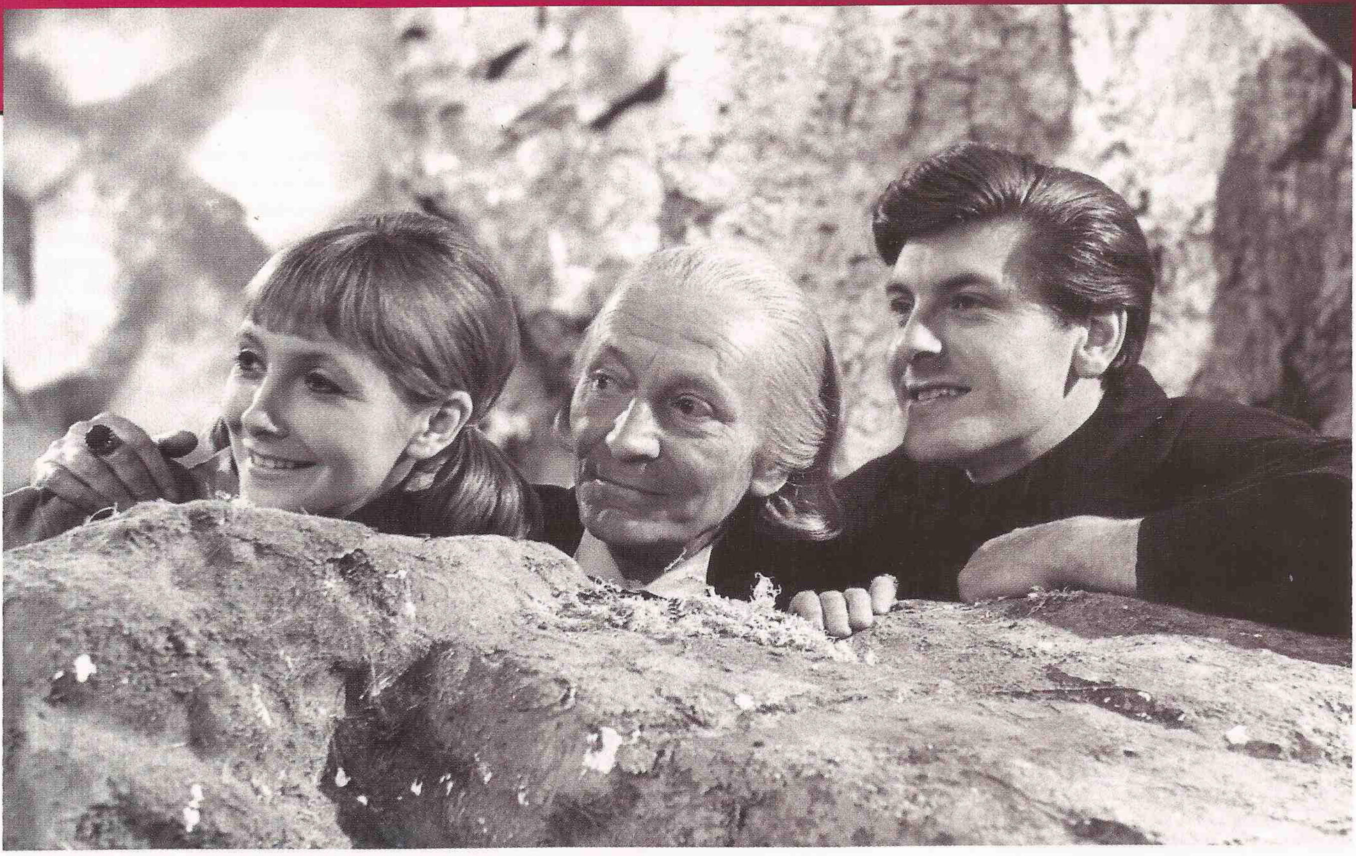
▼ *Below: Poor doomed Sandy, Vicki's pet Sand Beast.*

Despite her pragmatic approach to making television, Maureen still confesses to having been overwhelmed in her first months on the show...

"I think I must have been so traumatised by my first few," she considers. "I don't think I was all there really, because I hardly remember anything. The terrifying thing when I first got there was getting this script that thick," she gestures an inch between her thumb and forefinger, "which I had to learn in a week. I couldn't believe that this was possible! I'd always had the luxury of six weeks' rehearsal, where you just rehearsed and the lines just go in, the thoughts go in, the ideas go in. They all had their scripts out of their hands on the first day, second day, no scripts at all. I just thought this was out of my league – I didn't know how to do it. But I think by the end of that first episode I'd also put the script down. Once you'd relaxed and realised that there wasn't that much to learn, and it was only so big, you only had so much to do."

Arriving as the first new cast member on a hit show, Maureen's ▶

▼ *Bottom: The TARDIS crew have a toga party in* ***The Romans****.*



◀ appointment was big news, and the press soon made their presence felt. "When the news broke, there were journalists camping outside the flat and talking to the neighbours," she recalls, uncomfortably. "We were in the front room with the curtains drawn, and climbing out the back window. I was terrified. I didn't have a clue that I'd be appearing on the front cover of the *Daily Mail*, and it was just astounding to me. I felt, 'Why am I famous when I haven't done anything? Nobody's heard of me. That's not what I'm going to be famous for!' I just found it mystifying, and I still do, really."

> **"I sat on the set by myself, doing my kind of Stanislavsky preparation for the death of Sandy. It must have seemed comical to the others!"**

Maureen made her *Doctor Who* début in January 1965's *The Rescue*, which saw the Doctor take the newly-orphaned Vicki under his wing. "I can recall my first story, with the monster, and I had to be very upset because he died, didn't he?" she smiles, remembering Vicki's pet Sand Beast, Sandy. "I sat on the set by myself, doing my kind of Stanislavski preparation. I don't think they were very used to my way of acting, really, not in a thing like *Doctor Who*. But I needed to do it, because I had to cry. It's difficult to cry when you're young. Accessing your emotions is something that took me a long time to learn. So there I was taking it seriously, and it must have seemed a bit comical. But I can remember [William] Russell and Jackie saying, 'That's very good, working like that, that's real work.' They were wonderfully nurturing and so encouraging." The support of her co-stars was something that Maureen was very grateful for during those early months. "They were grown-up actors, with a huge amount of experience compared to me, all new to television. They had lots of stuff to tell me and they couldn't help but be like mentors, really."

The notoriety of appearing in a mainstream series proved the most difficult adjustment for Maureen to make. "Television was so different in those days – it was so new. People couldn't believe it when they saw you in the street. It was as though you had come out of the box and they didn't know how to talk to you, they didn't know how to behave. It was a very strange experience, it really was – and I didn't like it. Now, when I came to do *Casualty* many years later, people would come up and you'd have a proper discussion. That is nice – you like it. You feel like you're making connections with people. But when I did *Doctor Who*, it wasn't like that."

▲ *Top: With Hartnell and Peter Purves (Steven) in* ***The Time Meddler.***

▲ *Above: Vicki encounters the Xerons in* ***The Space Museum.***

▼ *On the planet Vortis in* ***The*** *"dreadful"* ***Web Planet.***

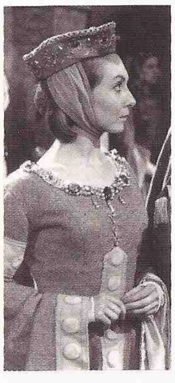
No deep and meaningfuls about Koquillion's plight with Joe Public then? "They'd go, 'Oh, it's her – it's Vicki! Are you Vicki?'" she sighs, miming the ordeal with bemusement. "And you'd say hello, but where does the conversation go after that? Nobody knew what to do – I didn't know what to do, they didn't know what to do, and it was kind of aggressive, because they were stuck for what to do next. It was just that people weren't used to it, and never, *never* expected to see you in the street because they didn't think you were a real person. They thought you were a tiny thing that lived in a box."

Although Maureen has avoided reviewing her work on *Doctor Who*, she was recently persuaded to revisit *The Web Planet* (1964), whilst contributing an interview to its DVD release. What did she make of the weird and wonderful insects of the planet Vortis 40 years on? "Oh, isn't it dreadful!" she smirks. "I mean, the creatures are wonderful. I adored those

little scrubbing brushes that go along," she laughs, referring to the fearsome venom guns, "and those wonderful wavy, tragic Menoptra characters. They were incredible, wonderful inventions!" she says, enthusiastically.

"I thought the writing was wonderful, the effects were wonderful – the thing that creaked was just the cameras, those lumbering, great cameras. You constantly seemed to be getting to the end of a bit of set and it would go a bit further than it should, and creak back on. It just seemed like theatre that you were a bit too close to. You didn't have the colour and you could see the way it worked, but that makes it very charming.

"Yes, *Doctor Who* was more like theatre than almost anything else on television," she continues. "In the theatre, you create illusions with very simple means, just like we did in *Doctor Who*. When I watch it now, it's just like watching rather creaky weekly rep – that's *exactly* what it's like!"



▲ *Back in time again – Vicki visits the court of Richard the Lionheart in **The Crusade**.*

As Maureen neared the end of her first season on *Doctor Who*, William Russell and Jacqueline Hill decided to leave the show, bowing out in the Dalek caper *The Chase*. The loss of two close colleagues reportedly hit William Hartnell hard. "He was desperately upset about that. *So* upset," Maureen concurs. "For me, I loved Jackie and [William] Russell, but I never stopped thinking like an actor. I thought, 'they've been in it a long time, they've had enough'. So I wasn't devastated by it, whereas for Bill, it really was very tough. I can remember him being very, very sad and talking about how we couldn't replace them – what were we going to do?"

▲ *The Doctor and his young ward 'Victor' in **The Crusade**.*

◀ *Above right: The Doctor manages to convince everyone he is a skilled lyre player in **The Romans**.*

Fortunately, some chance casting seemed to restore Hartnell's faith. Maureen takes up the story: "Peter Purves had come in to play this weird Texan on the top of the Empire State Building," she says, referring to Dalek-baiting tourist Morton Dill, in *The Chase*. "He was just such fun and got on very well with Bill. I can remember Bill and myself sitting with Jackie and Russell in a corner of the studio, wondering if they'd have him back full-time. Bill suddenly thought 'God, yes!' because he had really liked him, and it seemed like a wonderful solution."

Lambert subsequently offered Purves the role of new companion Steven Taylor, who joined the show at the end of the same story.

"And so, by the time Peter came in, I think Bill was very, very happy. I don't think there was any sort of gestation period for us."

The arrival of Steven also brought a welcome shift in focus for Vicki. "Peter was fun, and we were much more the same age, I think, where before the other characters were more parental. Vicki had one granddad and two parents, in a way, so it was a different sort of a relationship. I also wasn't the little newcomer with Peter, so it didn't feel like being the little new girl any more. And also, because Peter got on so very well with Bill, a lot of that burden of laughing Bill out of his moods and tempers and things – which had been very much my job – passed from my shoulders. I think I probably settled a bit."

Although she now felt more at home on *Doctor Who*, Maureen found herself increasing dissatisfied with Vicki's character and the show's scripts. "I used to get upset about the psychology of *Doctor Who*. I can remember one episode where I was left behind [*Journey into Terror*] and Doctor Who had gone. I remember standing there, watching the TARDIS go away, tears pouring down my face, and the Doctor – the only person I had in the whole world who meant anything to me – was gone, leaving me, not just in a different place, but a different world and time," she says forcefuly. "And then in the next episode, I'm just wandering around going, 'Woo, look at this, isn't this exciting?'

"I used to go to the script meetings and say, 'This is terrible! Children are very logical – you can't have someone pouring with tears because the only person that matters to them is gone, then this mindless sort of idiocy next week. You *mustn't* do that!' I used to get very cross," she adds, with a smirk.

And were the production team sympathetic to these concerns? "I got the feeling that I was arguing with a wall. I can remember occasions where the writers would look at me with a sort of fond sympathy. They probably thought the same, but for the sake of the story, and the sake of the drama of the thing, I just had to shut up and do it," she shrugs. "I don't know who was right and who was wrong, really. Because I only looked about 12-and-a-half, I wasn't really taken seriously."

Does working on a show with a large young audience come with responsibility then? "I think kids are amazing. They were terrified of *Doctor Who*, but you look at it and think – why? Though I thought in *The Web* ▶

◀ *Planet*, that terrible webby stuff that came down over us was that was horrible, wasn't it?" she says, recalling a suffocating web that marked one of the story's cliffhangers. "I have a vague memory of that being really quite worrying for us to do!"

And what did the children at home make of the horrors? "Kids *like* being frightened!" she replies briskly. "People like being frightened, whatever age. I suppose because I never took it seriously, I couldn't imagine that anyone else would, though I know there were some kids who were seriously frightened by *Doctor Who*!"

For *Doctor Who*'s third series, changes were afoot behind the scenes, and the arrival of new producer John Wiles sealed Vicki's fate.

> "As in the theatre, we used to create illusions by very simple means. Actually Doctor Who was like rather creaky weekly rep. Exactly like it, in fact!"

Maureen returned from a holiday to unexpectedly discover that she would be written out at the end of the next serial, *The Myth Makers*. "I really don't recall how it happened," she admits. "I just can't remember. I suppose I began to realise when new scripts stopped arriving for me." Certainly, her abrupt exit was no great blow for the actress: "I'd imagine once I got over my initial reaction, I was quite relieved to be going."

Going back to the life of a jobbing actor, Maureen found it difficult to get work in the wake of her stint on the show. "I did one job immediately after *Doctor Who*, which was a Christmas play. Because I'd been in a children's series they thought it was a good idea. But then I was simply out of work. I was unemployable after *Doctor Who*. I just assumed that I had been so bad in it that no one wanted to know any more! So I went off and did some teaching in this incredibly tough girl's school in Kennington for a few months, really believing that I wouldn't work again."

Fortunately, a Shakespearean role at the Oxford Playhouse arrived and put Maureen's career back on track. "I was back to my classical theatre career, as though it had begun again. That's how I've always seen it and I don't know if that's the case or not, really. I don't think that the television work I was offered once my theatre career began was anything to do with *Doctor Who*. All these wonderful directors I worked with afterwards, certainly didn't know I had any connection to *Doctor Who*."

Looking back, does she regret working on the show? "It's hard to say you regret doing anything, because you do what you do and that's your life, but I think anyone who says they don't regret anything *at all* is either lying or very lucky. But do I regret it? I do sometimes, because I think in the sense of what my career turned out to be it was a complete aberration. It was not the line of the way my life was going, or the way my work was going, or the way I wanted to go. I wanted to be famous for my work, not for appearing on telly every Saturday when I had done nothing, achieved nothing, and knew nothing. I never felt part of that television world, somehow. I felt fine coming in to do a play, but not that with living as part of the routine television world. I've never been a good series person. I didn't do another one until *Casualty* [Maureen played Elizabeth Straker in the popular BBC medical drama from 1986-87) and I had exactly the same problems as with *Doctor Who*. I'd learned nothing over all those years!"

So where does she think was wrong with her approach? "I think if you're going to be in a series, you've got to hang very loose, and not really try to play a character. I used to have script meetings on *Casualty* and say, 'You can't suddenly give this character a daughter, when you've never told me before – I'd be acting this completely differently if I thought she had a daughter.' And *Casualty* was very good – it was excellent when I was in it, as a matter of fact. And I was fine for a couple of episodes, but then I didn't like it – I just got that trapped feeling."

During the 1970s, Maureen's career dovetailed into writing, which had been a private passion for many years. "Well, I think when you're young, you just create – you do whatever you do without self-consciousness. I always wrote, I always wrote stories, I wrote essays, poems… lots and lots of poems. In fact, the first actual money I ever earned was for a poem in the *Liverpool Echo* when I was seven. But I never thought of getting published. I was

▼ *Top left: Steven, the Doctor and Vicki are surrounded by the ever-so cute Chumblies in* ***Galaxy 4****.*

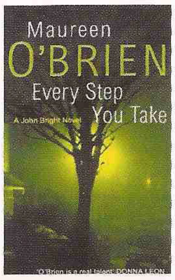
▲ *Above: After leaving* ***Doctor Who****, Maureen appeared in Anglia Television's 1969 thriller* ***The Double Agent****, also starring Leonard Rossiter and Brian Blessed.*

working away, trying and trying to make my writing better.

So how did she make the leap to professional author? "I was forced into writing a children's play in the 1970s. I did that, it was very successful, then I started taking writing a bit more seriously, but never finished anything, but I then wrote a radio play, and – miracle upon miracles – the first book. I think luck is everything. My acting agent had just got a book agent at the time I finished my first novel. He was keen on thrillers and read my manuscript. It was sent to exactly the right publisher, and it was accepted in three days."

▲ *Adopting the guise of 'Cressida', Vicki finally left the Doctor for Trojan prince Troilus (James Lynn) in* ***The Myth Makers.***

▼ *Maureen now has a successful career as a novelist.*



That first novel, *Close Up on Death*, was eventually published in 1989, beginning her second career as a bestselling crime novelist. "I'm interested in crime because I'm interested in psychology," she explains. I'm not interested in criminal hierarchy or career criminals really – I'm interested in real life and people's real problems in real life now."

She describes her style as "hard and brisk", favouring short, sharp sentences and dark content. "I think the world is a pretty grim place. Even when I was very small, I never thought the world was a jolly, nice, sweet, jovial place. It's pretty bad for most people, and it's very badly run. Human beings are very cruel – crueler than any other animal, I think. Life is very cruel to a lot of people, and I'm interested in writing about that."

Maureen's novels feature the central figure of Detective Inspector John Bright, and are often set in Kentish Town, her home for 20 years. "I love Kentish Town," she explains. "I love the mix, the vibrancy, the clash of all the different races and creeds and colours. There's an extraordinary mix. It's very scruffy and filthy, yet with these beautiful houses. I like that contrast a lot."

Maureen sees little difference between her respective work as an actress and author. "It's just like acting. Every time I write a character, I'm in that role – I want to be in that role." she explains. "If I were playing John Bright – which is highly unlikely – but if I were, you just totally live inside this character and create." And was it a leap to write for a central male character? "At first I always wrote from a female point of view. I didn't dare to write as a man – I just didn't dare to do that. But as I've got to know him better and better, I've found it easier to write inside him. So the latest book is definitely written in his voice and from his point of view. It's a very curious experience," she admits.

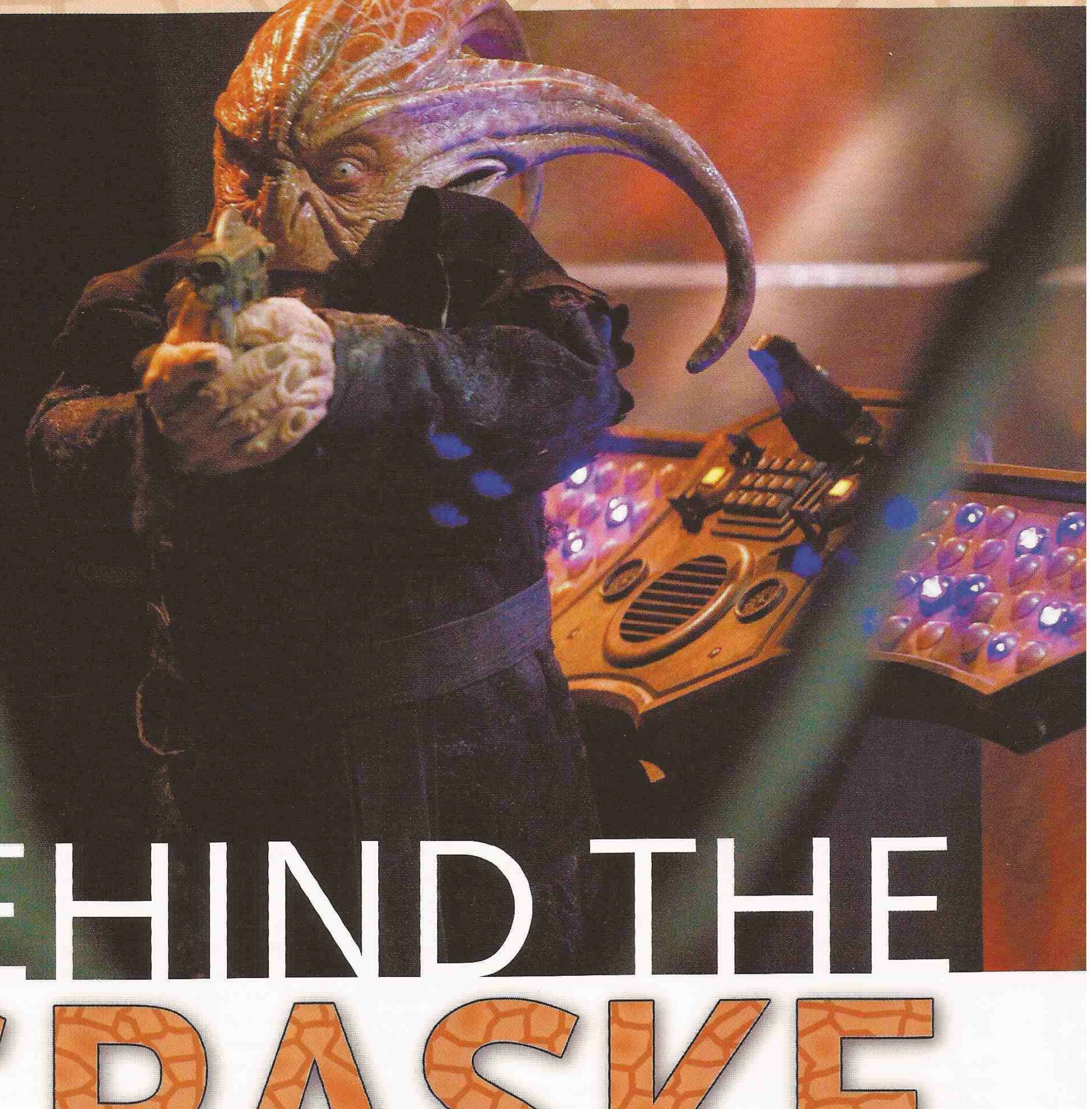
With an ongoing contract, Maureen has just delivered her latest manuscript, with a new John Bright novel to write in 2006. "I think he probably next has to go into the West End," she ponders. "Into a special homicide unit, or something like that. He's got to move. He's been in Kentish Town too long," she says with genuine concern. Part of that process will involve direct research with the police force, which Maureen has often used as part of her writing process: "Kentish Town police has a wonderful public relations guy, who tells me all sorts of terrific stuff, so I shall ask their advice on where John Bright should go next, and what I should do with him."

This year also sees the publication of the first French translation of Maureen's work, something which fills her with pride. "I'm longing to be published in French, because they take crime and noir fiction so seriously. They're not snobbish about genre fiction, unlike here. It's either good book, or it's not. It's either well-written, or it's not. You don't feel relegated."

As our conversation draws to a close, I wonder how Maureen has found her first taste of the convention circuit. "It's not really my thing," she admits. "It is nice to see that people are still interested in this, but I'm not. When I was young, I thought history was very interesting, seeing your name in a book with the date – the idea that someone would come across that all those years later. I've spent my life doing wonderful things in the theatre, wonderful things on television, wonderful, wonderful things, and I'm just remembered for this, as though I never did anything else. People today have said, 'Oh, have you done other things?' or 'weren't you in *Taggart*?'" She gives a groan of mock despair: "*Taggart*!

"I mean it is nice to be remembered for anything at all, but I wish I was remembered for the rest of my career as well. It makes me not believe in history, any more – what does history matter? Nobody remembers anyway," she finishes with a slight smile. "No, they only remember *Doctor Who*!" DWM

Maureen's latest novel, *Every Step You Take*, is available now in paperback. With thanks to 10th Planet (*tenthplanet.co.uk*).



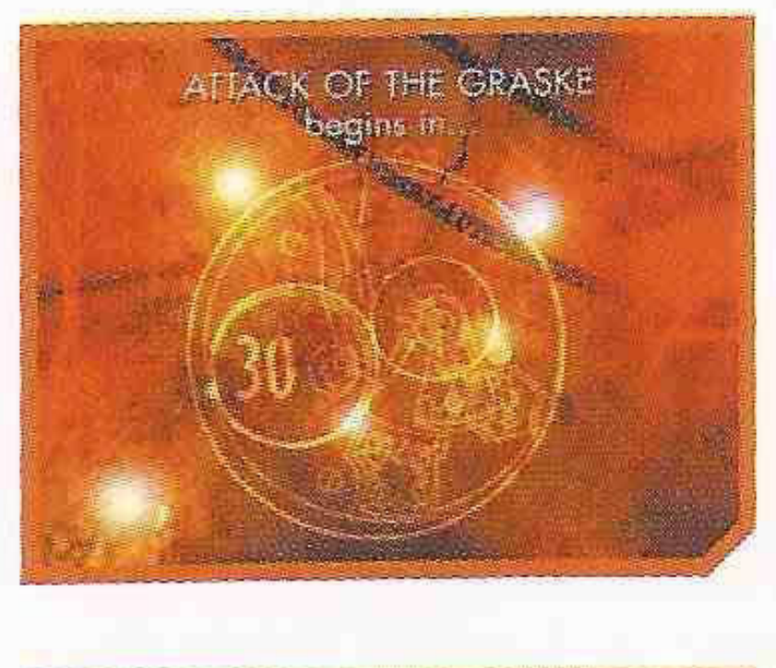
BEHIND THE GRASKE

WHEN THE TENTH Doctor sees a Great Big Threatening Button, we all know what he likes to do.

But did you, faithful reader, have what it took to press your own Big Red Button – the one on your remote control – after the credits rolled on *The Christmas Invasion*? Well, did you?

>> Analysing feedback from your sonic screwdriver. (What do you mean you haven't got one? Get thee to the nearest branch of Woolworths!) <<

Attack of the Graske was scripted by Gareth Roberts, who's written several popular *Doctor Who* novels for Virgin and BBC Books, and comic strips for **DWM**. He is also a successful television writer, with credits including *Coronation Street*, *Emmerdale*, *Brookside*, and the BBC's remake of *Randall and Hopkirk (Deceased)*. How, then, did he get involved with this, the first ever interactive TV episode of *Doctor Who*?



ANALYSING FEEDBACK
FROM SONIC SCREWDRIVER...

>> Use the number keys to make your choice. <<

Option 1: Gareth held executive producer Russell T Davies hostage in a stasis pod on the planet Griffoth, the Graske homeworld, until the Doctor Who production team met his demands.

Option 2: It all started with a phone call from script editor Simon Winstone, one afternoon in September...

"The BBC interactive people had approached the *Who* office, I think, and Russell suggested me to do it," explains Gareth. "My Ninth Doctor novel, *Only Human*, must have helped me considerably. That was, I think, the first time I was really flying with a *Who* book, and I guess Russell thinks that too."

Russell says: "Gareth had already become close to the production team, having worked with [script editor] Helen Raynor on his BBC novel – which we loved, completely – and the new *Quick Reads* scheme. And he knows Simon Winstone from their Virgin days. That's with a capital 'V', obviously! *Attack of the Graske* was a brilliant way to get Gareth involved properly. He's a great, witty, inventive writer and, just as importantly, he understands formats wonderfully. He has a mighty brain, that boy! The script was a tricky construction, very unlike ordinary scripts, and Gareth knows the show and interactive media well enough to make it work. I wouldn't have had a clue! I left all the hard work to Sophie Fante, the Producer, and Ashley Way, the Director - they're the ones who really made the whole thing come alive."

> "Basically I had to try to distill the entire essence of Doctor Who into just 15 minutes!" Gareth Roberts

"The proposition for an interactive episode actually came right from the top," says Julie Gardner, Head of Drama at BBC Wales and *Doctor Who*'s other executive producer, "from Jana Bennett and her team, who have an initiative called TV Plus, which is looking at ways to build extra value into the BBC's big titles. The scheme is designed to embrace and explore new media, such as podcasts, websites, and digital interactive elements. Yet again it's a clear signal of the BBC's support of *Doctor Who*, that we were top of the list. Given the Doctor's adventurous nature, and the show's already-heavy internet presence, it was obvious that we were ideally suited to the format."

>> What was Gareth's initial reaction to the commission? <<

Option One: "I took the whole thing very nonchalantly," he says. "Just another commission for an old pro."

Option Two: "No, of course not, I was very excited! I had a fag in my hand while I was talking to Simon and couldn't find an ashtray, so I dripped ash all over a bookshelf, which I now call 'Stain of the Graske'! The greatest thing about doing *Who* now is not so much that it's the show that I grew up with and adored, but that it's a big bold hit that everybody loves. Since leaving the soaps, I've been doing stuff that hasn't quite come off or has been under-promoted or badly scheduled – all the usual writers' excuses, but I believe they're true. Like the rest of the world, I knew on the basis of Series One that *Doctor Who* is a very disciplined, thought-out series on every level. A lot of telly people can be quite vague, they leave things to chance; Russell, Julie and the rest really know what they want and how to do it. Of course, that can give you screaming abdabs as well! You think, 'Am I up to this?' But you just have to get on and do it."

Gareth sums up what *Doctor Who* means to him: "Before it came back, I thought, 'I'm old now, it won't tickle me like it did. I know Russell and Phil and the writers, so I'll probably be sat back on the settee going, "Hmm, that was rather effective," and being all adult and considered about it.' Shock cut to me at the end of *Bad Wolf*, dancing around the room like a nancy at that cliffhanger!"

HOW MUCH OF A FREE REIGN WAS Gareth given in developing the interactive narrative?

"The brief had to be guided quite closely by the interactive team and Simon Winstone," says Russell, "but Gareth came in with huge invention. I think you can tell from the dialogue in the Victorian scene that it was the sort of thing he'd been dying to write."

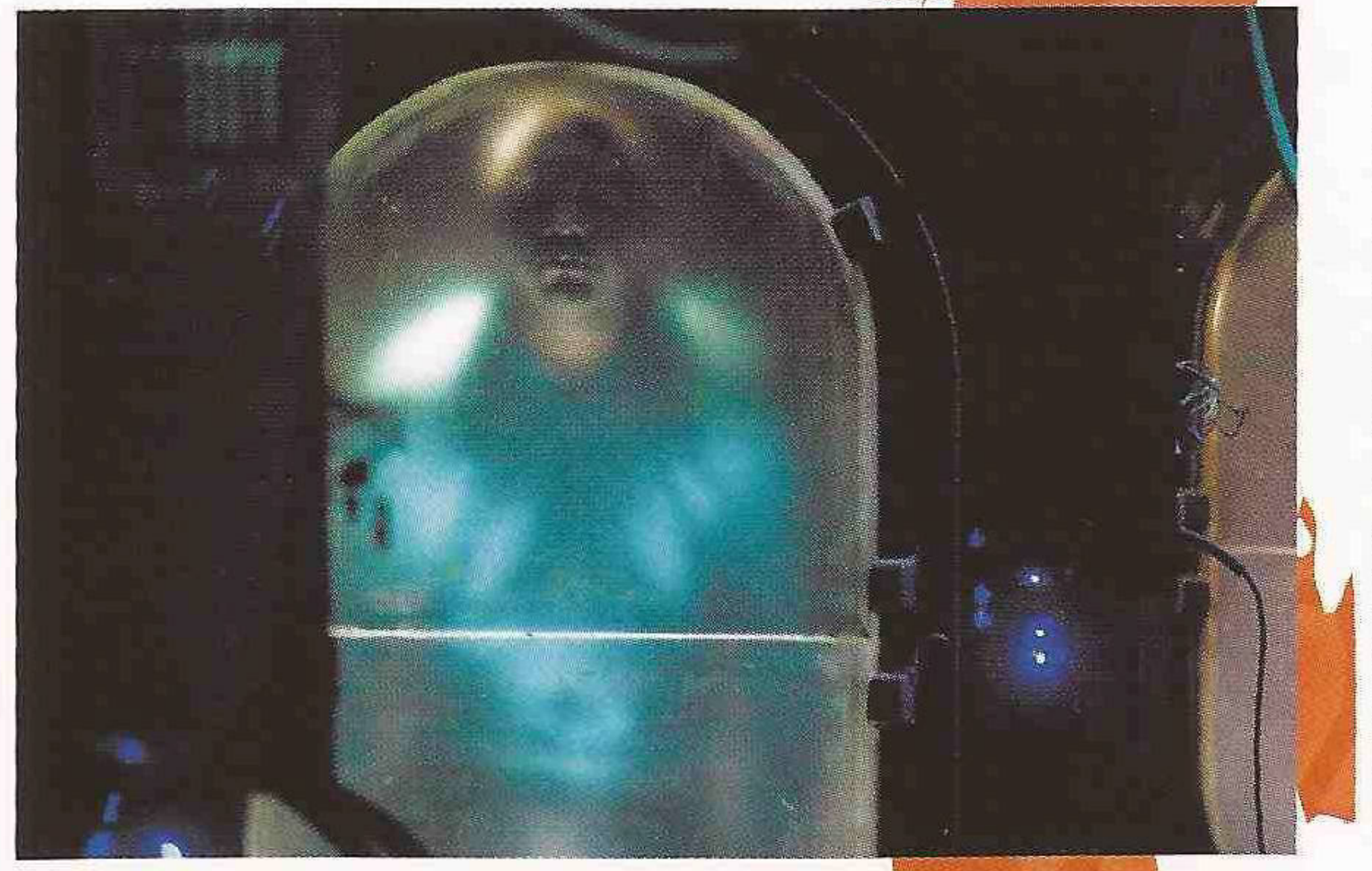
"The interactive people had written up a very basic example of a story," confirms Gareth, "just to show the technical limits of what they could and couldn't do. But Simon encouraged me to absorb those basics and then just chuck it and let my imagination go, based on the idea that you at home are the companion and it's the Doctor testing you. So I had a very free rein. I just kept thinking back to my own childhood, and what drew me to the series in the first place. As a kid, you're longing to get into the TARDIS and fly it. I knew that we had to see past, present and future, and travel to another planet, and there had to be as many monsters as possible. Linking the sonic screwdriver to the remote was always there. And it was Christmas, so it had to be Christmassy, but in a different way to *The Christmas Invasion*. Basically, I had to try to distil the entire essence of *Doctor Who* into 15 minutes!"

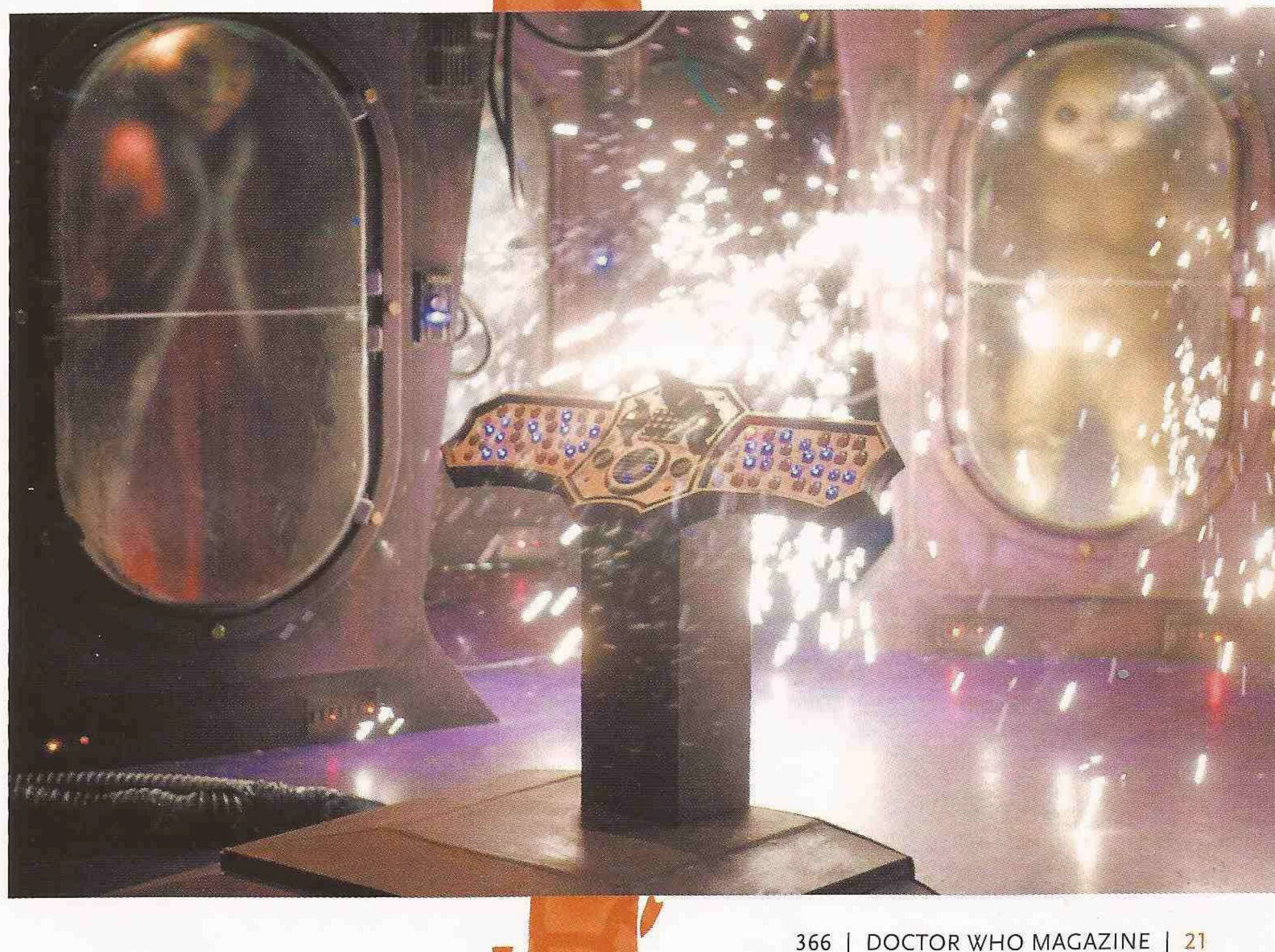
"Gareth and Simon had to work closely with [visual effects house] The Mill," continues Russell, "to establish what could be achieved on screen for the budget. I suggested the inclusion of a Slitheen because, apart from a Slitheen being irresistible at Christmas, I knew that The Mill already had one rendered in their computers. But that was about it for me. That's why we chose Gareth – we knew that he could cope with all those different elements, and still provide cracking drama and dialogue. I more or less left them to it, simply reading all the different drafts. I'm so pleased with the way that Gareth and the team ran with the idea, and made something remarkable." ▶

▼ *Below: The Doctor connects your remote control to the sonic screwdriver.*

▼ *Middle: A prisoner on the planet Griffoth.*

▼ *Bottom: The blast releases the Slitheen!*





▲ *Up close and personal with the mischievous Graske!*

ATTACK OF THE GRASKE adopted a dual-stream system, so you couldn't have different pathways spreading off in tons of different directions; each multiple-choice task had to have only one correct and one incorrect route. However, Gareth insists that the interactive format inspired rather than hindered him. “Obviously it meant that we had to go even faster than the TV series,” he says, “so there weren't going to be emotional character-based scenes. The important thing was to keep the spirit of *Doctor Who* in the challenges; to be rational, to think quickly, to try to avoid violent solutions. Like all fans, I was weaned on that spirit from the cradle, so that wasn't a problem. It was never going to be like 50 Cent's game! We were all very keen to make the final challenge a difficult one, to give the viewer two reasonable-sounding options very quickly and face them with the big choice with time running out. Very *Doctor Who*. We wanted it to reflect, in a way, the end of *The Christmas Invasion*, where you can see things from the view of both the Doctor and Harriet Jones.”

> **“We didn't want to do anything that was half-hearted. We wanted monsters and spectacle!”** Russell T Davies

◀ *Two more of the Graske's victims – ‘Mum’ (Lisa Palfrey) and ‘urchin’ (Ben Oliver). And YOU could be next!!*

And what inspired Gareth to create the Graske?

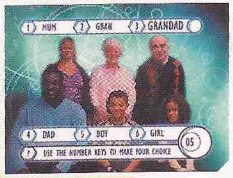
“I needed a monster that could travel in time and space for the Doctor to chase,” he says, “and I wanted to start with normality and move out, like all the best *Doctor Who*. The idea of snatching people grew out of that. If you look at the most memorable villains – the Daleks and Cybermen – they're exaggerations of the worst human qualities and impulses, so you can relate to them and get drama out of it. That's why nobody's in a hurry to bring back the Krotons! I wanted the Graske to be small and sinister.”

The name of the monster went through the most changes – he was a Griffak, a Gr'thaaak, and a Graak before he was a Graske. “Russell gave him the final name,” reveals Gareth. “It's good because it sounds like ‘grasp’, which is what the Graske does. A Graske grasps!”

“Alien names with apostrophes,” adds Russell, “belong to *Babylon 5* and *Stargate*, not *Doctor Who*!”

Any other early ideas that were later abandoned?

“The first ideas that I came up with were far too timid,” admits Gareth. “Writing TV can give you a TV-sized imagination, so you approach things saying, ‘Can we afford this?’ You scale things down. That's exactly right for something like *Coronation Street*, where erecting the set for Betty's front room means you can't have the Duckworths' yard or whatever, but it's wrong, wrong, *wrong* for new *Doctor Who*. When I got the hang of that, it was full steam ahead. There was also, very briefly, a section set on Satellite Five. It was a futuristic Christmas, with people giving each other bizarre presents. But it was better sticking just to Victorian times.”



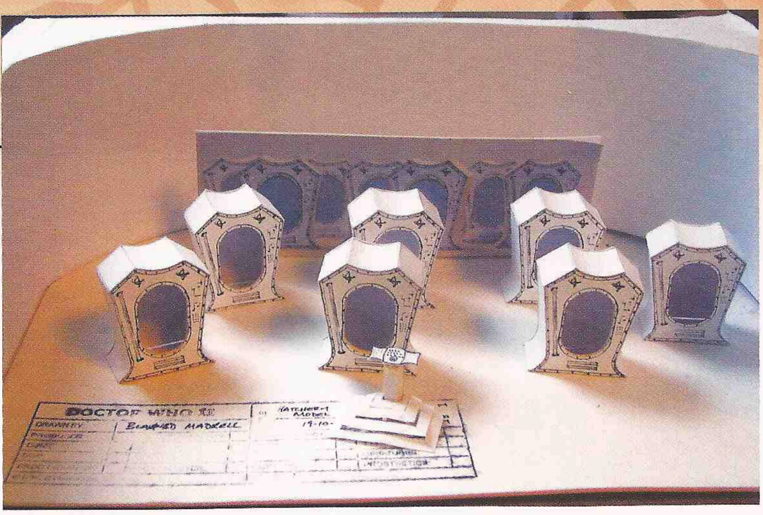
USE THE ARROW KEYS TO CHOOSE

The ambition and scope of *Attack of the Graske* was impressive, given that it was, in effect, an ‘extra’ to *The Christmas Invasion*. Was it always the plan to use brand new sets, specially cast actors, and bring on board additional crew?

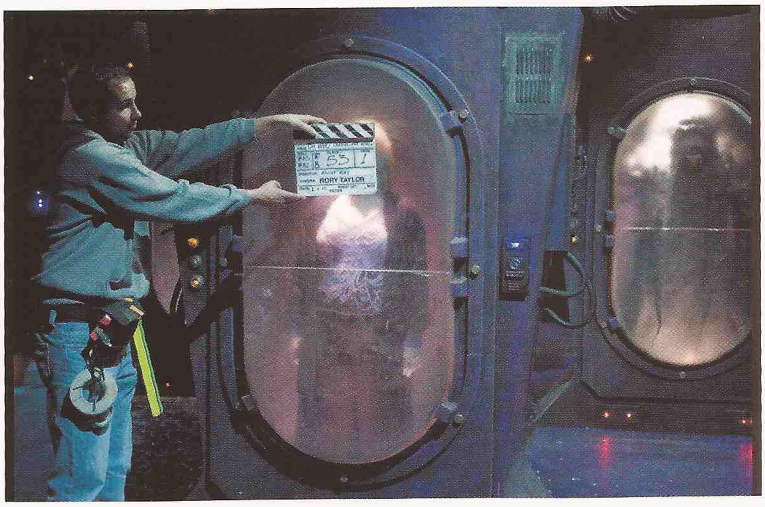
“We didn't want to do anything half-hearted,” insists Russell. “It would have been terrible – and not very *Doctor Who* – to have had David locked in a dark room solving word puzzles! We wanted monsters and spectacle. The whole point is that the new media experience should match the transmitted show, not be a pale cousin. I've got enough pale cousins as it is! I think the Graske's Hatchery – our first on-screen visit to an alien planet – is a brilliant achievement."

THE GRASKE PRODUCTION TEAM had to work in tandem with the regular *Doctor Who* team. While David shot his TARDIS scenes for Graske, the main crew was busy filming with Billie Piper elsewhere in Cardiff. "It was a complicated schedule, to say the least," confesses Russell, "but we're always increasing the team and looking for new talent, particularly from within BBC Wales itself, because we're always expanding – 14 episodes this year, plus the interactive game, let alone *Torchwood*! The more talent we can attract, the better every production will become."

"As with everything, *Doctor Who* is very much a team effort," asserts Edward Thomas, the production designer. "As I'm sure all my colleagues would agree, communication is key and everyone's input is invaluable. It's easy to single out what each head of department has contributed to a ▶

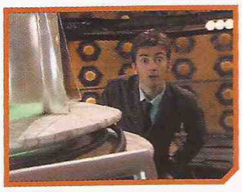


▶ The orginal design model for the Graske's Hatchery.



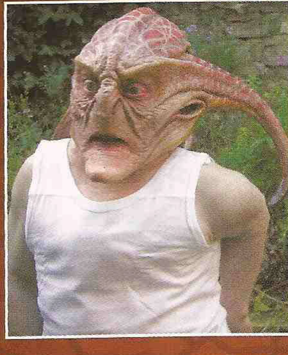
▲ The crew prepares for a take.

USE THE NUMBER KEYS TO MAKE YOUR CHOICE



▼ The Doctor needs YOUR help to fly the TARDIS!

'MASK OF THE GRASKE'



"THE PRODUCERS OF the interactive episode had wanted the Graske to be a CGI character," explains Neill Gorton, special make-up and prosthetics designer, "but, after discussions with The Mill, and based on the lack of time to get this special filmed, they realised that the only way to create him was as a prosthetic character. Of course, no one figured this out until very late in the day, leaving us just a couple of weeks to create him. With this in mind, I suggested they hire Jimmy Vee to play the Graske..."

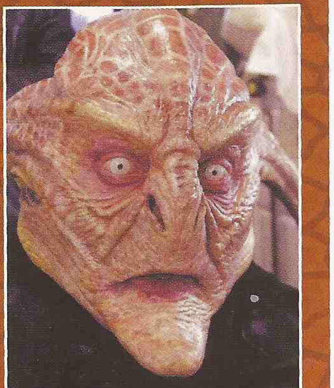
In Series One, three-foot-eight Jimmy played both the Moxx of Balhoon (*The End of the World*) and the piggy astronaut (*Aliens of London*). "He's a great performer," says Neill, "and a delight to work with. The advantage of using Jimmy is that we already had casts of his head, hands and teeth, as well as eye measurements for contact lenses, on which we could begin building the prosthetic elements immediately... The script suggested to me an evil but playful character. The idea of making him a kind of evil jester popped into my head. I did a quick doodle in which I amalgamated the three-pronged jester hat with the head of the creature. I sent this to Russell, Julie and the producers, and got an immediate approval. At that point, I handed over the project to Martin Rezard, who's one of the key technicians here at Millennium Effects. Martin realised the final prosthetic, as well as handling the on-set application of the make-up for the three days that the Graske was required in Cardiff."

How are Neill's Series Two experiences measuring up to Series One?

"In a way, there's more pressure," he considers, "but it's not from the production: it's from myself. Although I'm proud of the Series One work that we did, I also know that it wasn't as good as I'd like it to have been. The whole show was a learning curve for the entire production staff, and we all had to make a number of compromises to our visions along the way. This year, we have the chance to take everything a step further. The lines between departments and our relationships are more clearly defined and relaxed. Last year was the 'getting to know you' year. Naturally, since a lot of us had never worked together before, you're a little nervous. This year, everyone knows what each other is capable of. We can work a lot closer and play to one another's strengths. I think you're going to see the difference across the whole show. I've been blown away with what the design department has done this series with the sets and props. They were great last year, but they've surpassed themselves this year, and we've been trying to do the same with the prosthetics and creatures. You're going to be amazed when you see some of the monsters in Series Two. Everything we've created this year really is movie quality on a TV budget."

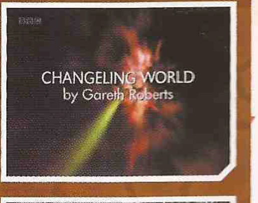
◀ Jimmy Vee, who previously played the Moxx of Balhoon and the space pig in two of last year's episodes, tries on the Graske's mask.

▶ Neill Gorton decided to make the Graske's head resemble a jester's hat.

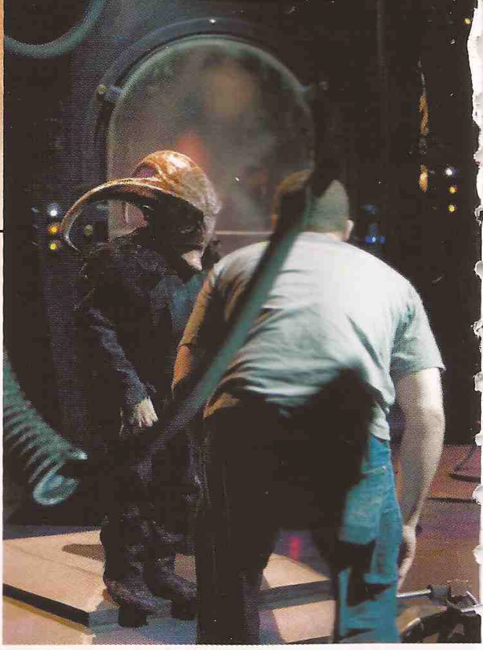


>>MORE<< THINGS WE'VE LEARNED THIS CHRISTMAS

- The working title of the interactive episode was *Changeling World*.
- Gareth Roberts toyed with the idea of having the Doctor say 'A Merry Christmas to all of you at home!' at the end of the episode, but then "I realised that it would just irritate the five people who'd get it," he laughs.
- The Victorian sequence was filmed late one night in Mount Stuart Square, in Cardiff. "The best thing was watching the onlookers when the Graske started running about," remembers Gareth. "Up until then, they thought it was a costume drama!"
- The trip to the past was originally to a witch-burning, but this was deemed far too gruesome.
- Jimmy Vee is a fully qualified stuntman as well as an actor. "Right from the start, we were keen to involve Jimmy," says Russell T Davies, "because he hasn't appeared in Series Two yet, and a season ain't a season without Mr Vee!"
- Neill Gorton didn't play *Attack of the Graske* on Christmas Day. "The outlaws were visiting," he says, "and it was a wrestling match for the remote control."
- But Gareth Roberts did. "Yes, I played it," admits the writer, "and I got the bits with the DNA grid over Earth spectacularly wrong!"
- Russell still doesn't understand how you choose that first key on the way to the Hatchery. Tsk!



BBC
USE THE NUMBER KEYS TO MAKE YOUR CHOICE
04



◀ design, but a whole host of people influences a design at every stage of its evolvement. I don't think people realise when they ask the question, 'Who designed the Graske homeworld?', that there are probably a couple of dozen people who've contributed to the final product."

Arwel W Jones, who art directed this interactive episode, explains that "We started very early on with an idea of something quite grotto-like for the Graske Hatchery – people encased in stalagmites, *et cetera*. However, for various reasons, including the fact that we haven't seen an alien landscape in the main series yet, we decided to go down a rather more engineered route."

What, then, were Arwel's main points of reference?

"An engine room," he states, "in the old steam boat sense. We wanted the Graske to be a nasty and unclean character, and so his environment had to mirror this. For the stasis pods, where people were to be kept for eternity, we wanted to reflect 'eternal rest', so you'll notice a slight nod in the coffin direction for the pod shape."

HAVING WRITTEN FOR VARIOUS incarnations of the Doctor in novels, audio dramas and comic strips, how easy did Gareth find capturing the Tenth Doctor's character? And what does he make of David's portrayal?

"At the time of writing *Graske*, I had the scripts for *The Christmas Invasion* and, I think, up to Episode 4," says Gareth. "My God, we're all in for a treat! David brings a different kind of physical energy to the part, and he seems less emotionally scarred than Chris, maybe even a little harder. He's very talkative and funny, and his mind is racing, bursting with ideas and observations. He seems to have a love of words and sounds. However, the essential core of the Doctor never changes. Loveable and dangerous. David's a marvel. He hits every line and delivers it better than you wrote it. It was arranged for him to do the interactive episode from autocue, cos he's so overworked, but he went off and learnt the script for the good of the project. He's an incredible actor."

So, what are the chances of further interactive episodes in 2006?

"Hopefully," says Julie, "this is just the first of the TV Plus initiatives; we're working on some more surprises, and extra content, for the launch of Series Two. *Doctor Who*, exploring the future – just as it should be!"

"The take-up for *Attack of the Graske* is reported to be very good indeed," Russell states. "Everyone's delighted. As Julie says, there are other, different plans afoot, too. I suppose we'll reassess as we approach Series Three. Hmm, *Revenge of the Graske*, I wonder..."

Two final questions, then. Firstly, since when was Rose a fan of ABBA?!

"Come on," laughs Gareth, "if you had the TARDIS, what would you do? You can take or leave the fall of Troy; I'd go and see various pop groups that split up before I started going to gigs. I think Rose and the Doctor have a lot of fun between their adventures."

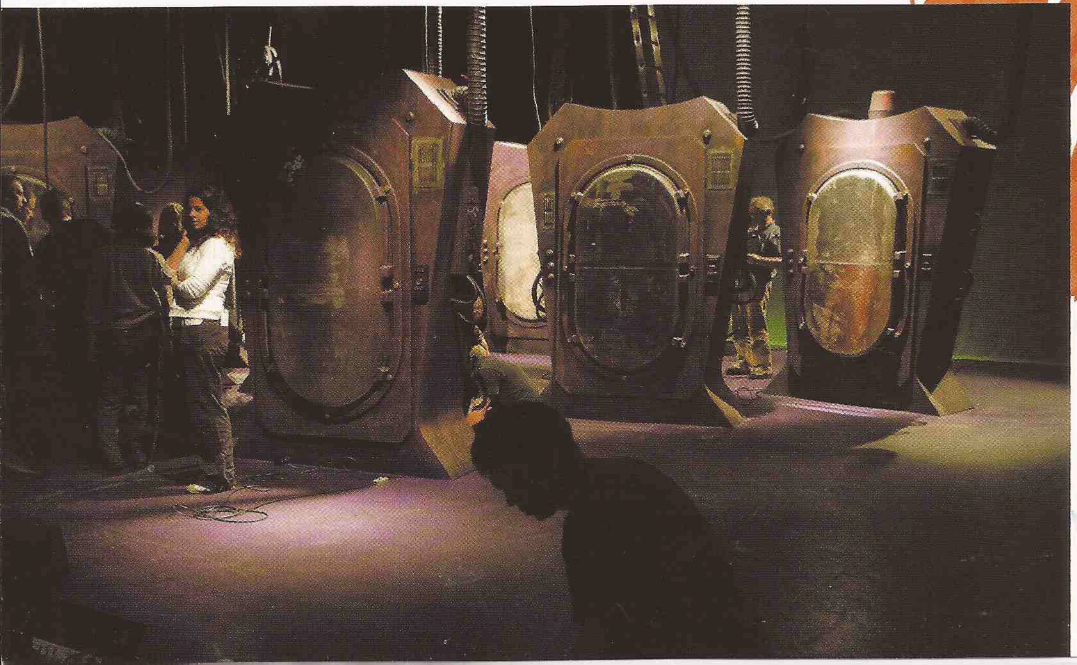
And, er, did the galaxy really implode when I switched to ITV?

Gareth nods, gravely. "Yes, it did. But it will take 40 million years for the entropy to reach Earth. Vortis has gone already, though. And it's all *your* fault." **BENJAMIN COOK** DWM

▲ *Top right: Jimmy Vee waits for his cue.*

▼ *The planet Griffoth is brought to life...*

> **"It was arranged for David to do the episode from autocue – but he went off and learnt the script!"** Gareth Roberts



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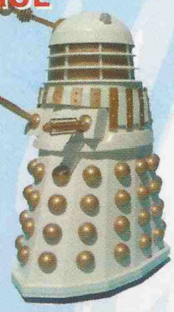

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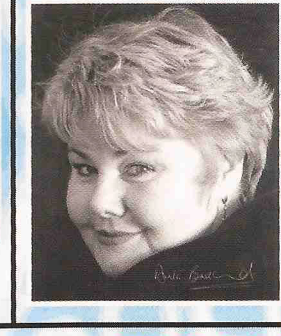

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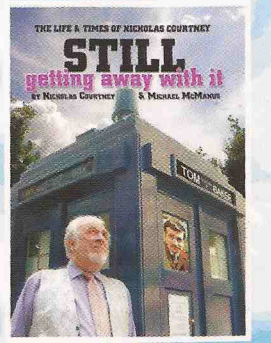

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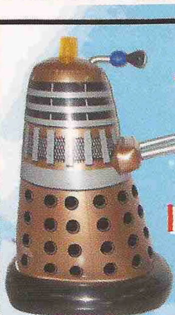

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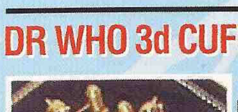

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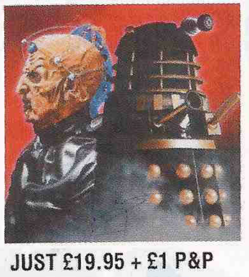

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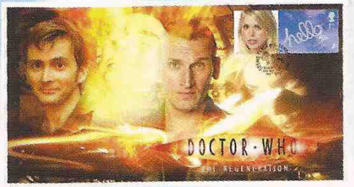

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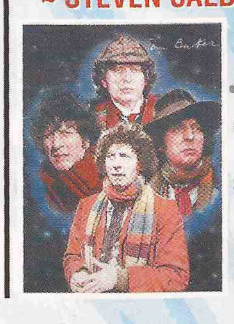

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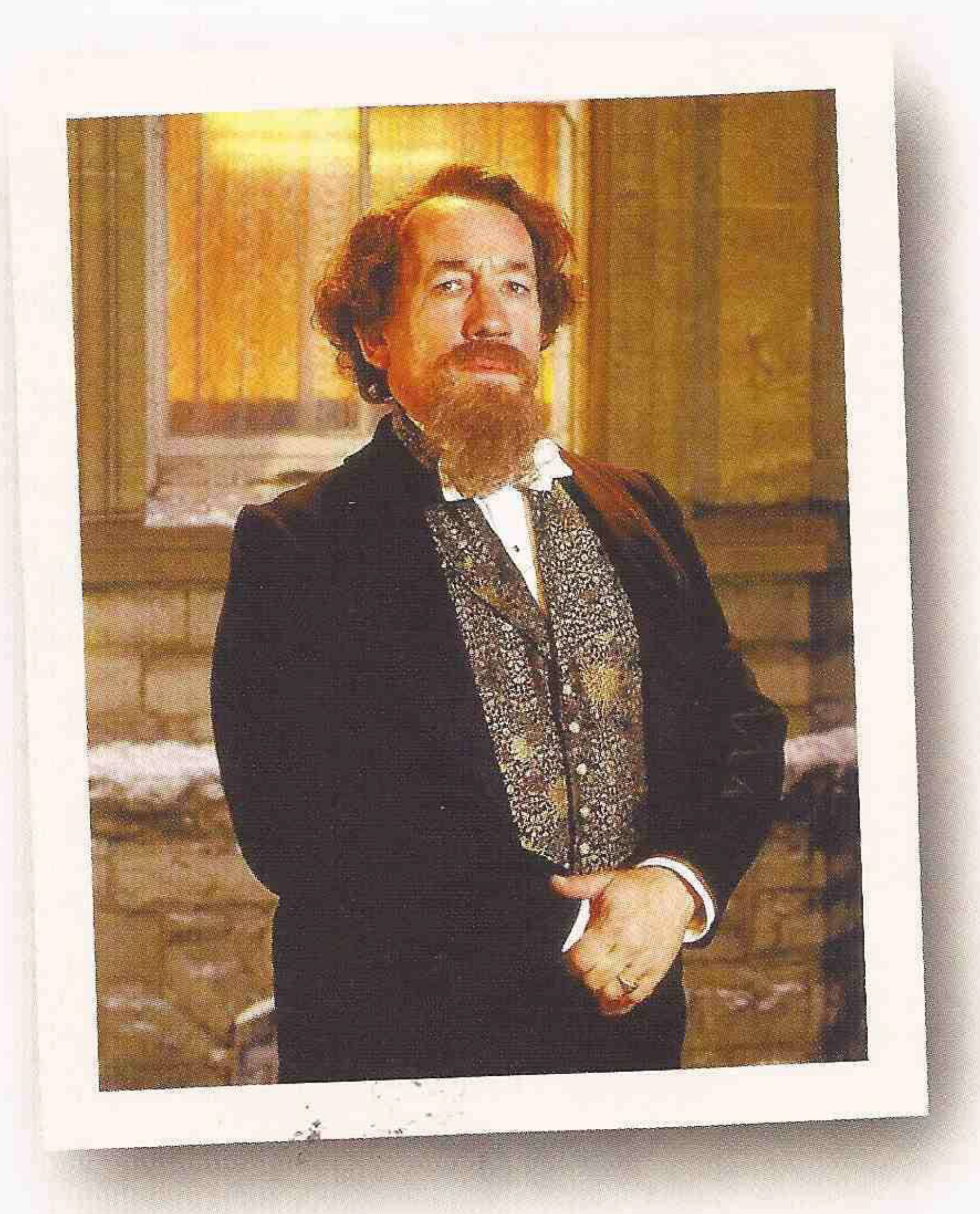


◀ *Simon Callow as Charles Dickens in Gatiss' **The Unquiet Dead.***

David Darlington speaks to the writer of last year's acclaimed episode *The Unquiet Dead*, and asks him about his latest script for the series, *The Idiot's Lantern*...

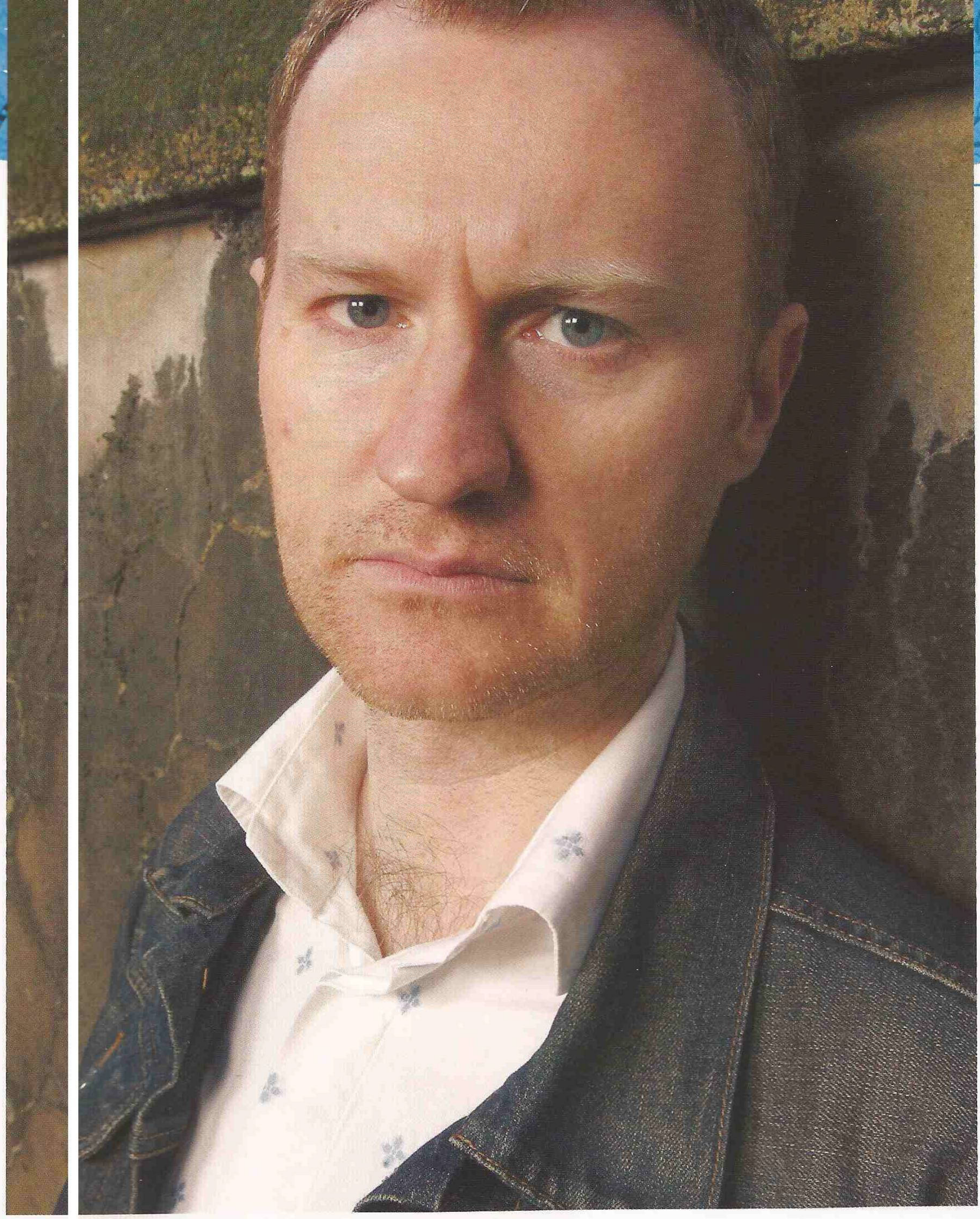
When we last spoke to Mark Gatiss [**DWM** 353], he'd had a rather hectic 2004 and claimed he'd be 'taking it easier next year'. Since when, of course, he's recorded a second series of sci-fi comedy *Nebulous* for Radio 4, appeared in another run of BBC Three's *Nighty Night*, overseen the release of *The League of Gentlemen's Apocalypse*, written another stage show... and started writing another episode of *Doctor Who*. You get the impression it hasn't really worked out as planned, don't you? "No," smiles Gatiss ruefully. "That's true!"

Mark Gatiss The beginning of this year was dominated really by the release of the *League of Gentlemen* film, and we're doing the tour show at the moment. And I'm kind of doing *Doctor Who* in the middle of it. It's Episode 7, so it's much later in the run than my last one, I think it's part of Block Four or something, and at the moment I don't even know when it will be shot. I think the recording's going to be quite late this time – it may even be February 2006 – although obviously that can be moved about a little bit.

The state of play is that I delivered a first draft quite a long time ago, but only very recently managed to have a sit-down meeting with Russell in Manchester, because they're up to their eyes in the first couple of recording blocks. Which is very different to last year, when my episode came quite early in the whole process, so it had to be done quicker. But lessons have been learned. I could easily have done a couple of drafts based on wrong thinking, and then had to go back to the beginning again – like I did with *The Unquiet Dead* – but this time round I've missed out those drafts. It's different with a new Doctor, of course, and the success of the show also changes a lot of things in your approach. Because it's worked phenomenally, completely beyond anyone's expectations, it's a case of 'Follow that!'

Was that scary for you the first time round as well? I mean, obviously your episode was done and dusted months in advance, but in the week before *The Unquiet Dead* was transmitted, two episodes had gone out and been hugely successful. Did you worry 'I'm next – what if everyone hates mine?'

Oh yes! I mean, I felt confident because I'd seen it and was very proud of it, and also I was very confident in Russell's vision of the first few stories. But the time when I knew that the whole thing just felt 'right' was at the press launch for *Rose*, when they showed clips of the rest of the series, including what was basically the pre-titles sequence of *The Unquiet Dead*. And you could see journalists almost visibly thinking 'This is really scary!' – and that was a marvellous feeling!



On which subject, your episode had a minor tabloid furore about the scariness and appropriateness of the content...

I went on *PM* on Radio 4 to defend it, and was very careful not to sound too glib... but to me that's absolutely the point of *Doctor Who*; it's a healthy scare, it's a roller-coaster thing. Fear is just as important and healthy an emotion as happiness, because it makes you feel alive. I'm humbled and thrilled at the amount of people who have said to me that their kids are still talking about it even now. And to me, if, in 20 years' time people are still saying 'Do you remember the one with the old lady zombie...?' then that's just like 'Do you remember the one with the maggots...?', you know? My work is done! David Tennant told me that the thing that moved him most about the whole experience was watching a report from the *Doctor Who* exhibition in Brighton on *Doctor Who Confidential*. Seven-year-old kids going 'I like the Slitheen and the Daleks!' moved him to tears, quite rightly, because... well, who'd have thought?

Go back just two or three years and the whole notion would have seemed ridiculous. Every now and then one would hear stories that someone was trying to revive *Doctor Who* – but we surely never thought it would come to this...

The key is that the BBC had such faith in Russell that they didn't pettifog him with the usual round of talking heads, picking the idea to bits and give it the death of a thousand cuts. Brilliantly, Russell was given his head and that's what made it a success. It's amazing how often that lesson has to be re-learnt.

Looking back, your episode feels like the one which is most self-consciously '*Doctor Who*-ish' – you can almost taste *The Talons of Weng-Chiang* off it. Was that your intention and are you doing

something similar second time around?

It's funny – *The Unquiet Dead* certainly *looks* the most traditional, but I don't know if it actually is. To people like you and me, part of the whole *Doctor Who* tradition is the number of historical and pseudo-historical stories. Obviously *Talons* casts a very long shadow – it's a Victorian story – and so with *The Unquiet Dead* you do immediately feel 'This is like *Doctor Who* as I remember it', and I was delighted with the actual production and Euros Lyn's direction.

But as to the actual *content*... Certainly the aspect of Gwyneth's sacrifice – that is, I think, very moving, and 'moving' is not something *Doctor Who* really strove for before, except when a Doctor died or a companion left or something. It wasn't really that kind of show before, but it is now. And so *The Unquiet Dead* might look like an old-fashioned *Doctor Who* episode, but content-wise it's different.

But my new episode... I don't know. What can I say? It's called *The Idiot's Lantern*, it's set in the 1950s... and there's a new Doctor! It's important that we get to know the new Doctor through Rose's eyes. It's the same thing that was done 40 years ago on *The Power of the Daleks* – you have to break the audience in gently.

It's strange to think that we've now reached the *Tenth* Doctor! And so much has happened since the Ninth Doctor made his début – even though it was still less than a year ago...

It's a measure of the impact Chris had, that by the time of *The Parting of the Ways*, you felt as though he had been the Doctor for three years or more. It was so affecting, I cried my eyes out at the holographic message, and the bit where he betrays Rose. It's fantastic.

The bit where the hologram turns round and looks at her?

[Gasps] Oh yes, that – that was absolute, copper-bottomed genius! Just at the moment your brain is thinking 'He should have delivered this speech direct to Rose... oh!' But when he pretends she's got to do something in the TARDIS to help him and he runs out and just stops... it's fantastic. And the regeneration is up there with *Planet of the Spiders* and *The Green Death* for me. It's like a piece of very rare, 'proper' telly.

So despite your close involvement, and the fact you must have had *some* idea of what was coming up, the show still had that sort of impact on you?

Completely. I actually didn't want to know about the later episodes, I wanted to just watch it. So some things were a surprise to me. I'm doing the same ▶

▲ *Rose and the Tenth Doctor prepare for new adventures...*

> "*Doctor Who* is no longer a cult – it's back to being 'the children's own programme that adults adore'! How magical..."

◀ this time round, really. It's always difficult bringing a new Doctor in, but David is a fantastic actor and a wonderful person, and there's a new audience that is going to be as shocked as you and I were when Jon Pertwee became Tom Baker.

There's a lot of comfort from Rose still being around. She's our point of contact. I've been re-watching all of *Doctor Who* through for six or seven years, doing my own 'Time Team'... and when I got to Tom's departure in *Logopolis*, it's extraordinary! When you look at it dispassionately, what happens is: Romana and K9 leave, Tegan, Adric and Nyssa join, the Doctor changes... and within the space of three or four stories, *everyone* is different! I would have kept Romana on, and killed *her* off in *Earthshock*, rather than Adric. How much more impact would that have had, if it had been a companion you had spent years with who had died? It's a shock to the system that the entire crew changes within three stories. And those sort of things I don't think you should be too glib about. Changes like that mean something. There's a reason that the first Tom Baker story is a UNIT story – it cushions you. And then the Doctor's off, and that's fine. There's a reason, most brilliantly, that in *The Power of the Daleks* Polly believes this new guy is the Doctor and Ben doesn't – and that by about Episode 3, Ben's just calling him 'Doctor', and you never really notice the point at which he starts to say it. It's a very gradual shift, very cleverly written by David Whitaker, and the sort of thing you can't take for granted. But I can't say often enough that I think David [Tennant] is going to be wonderful...

Of course, you've known David for some years. How strange was it for you, working on *Quatermass* with him the week his casting was announced? Especially given that the last time we spoke, you were refusing to even countenance ever being offered the role yourself...

You know that story Sylvester McCoy used to tell about having been announced as the new Doctor, he went to a convention in Atlanta to be confronted with the question 'When you arrived on Peladon, what were you thinking when..?' Well, David is the first Doctor who could *actually* answer that! 'Well, what I was feeling was...' But obviously, as long as I've known David, we've both talked about how much we'd love to be the Doctor, so yes, it was extraordinary. But honestly, I'm completely thrilled for him. I think it's a brilliant choice, he's reached just the right stage of his career to do it, and he's a fantastic actor. And he loves it so much that he will completely embrace it and rise to the challenge.

▼ *Gatiss as Glenn Bulb in BBC3's* **Nighty Night.**

It's bizarre seeing David turn up on *Blue Peter* – and was already introduced as 'Doctor Who'. It wasn't 'You won't know who this guy is, but...' – he was just 'Doctor Who'.

Mmm. What's genuinely magical about the success of the series is that *Doctor Who* is not a cult programme any longer. It's back to being 'the children's programme that adults adore'. And that means you're not faintly embarrassed about getting DWM out on the tube, and that you're able to accept that when 'Doctor Who' appears on *Blue Peter* to judge a competition, everybody knows who he is. After half a minute at the end of Episode 13! And I've heard that sales of things like *Pyramids of Mars* went up by a thousand or so the week after *Rose* was on. It's just what we always dreamed of! It's interesting to think what kids might make of 'old' *Doctor Who*, because although it's very different in a lot of ways, in others it's just the same.

I remember thinking very early on in the pre-production process on the last series, that the whole thing was so *Doctor Who*. Much more like *Doctor Who*, in fact, than the Paul McGann film, which, superficially, is incredibly, slavishly *Doctor Who*, but it's actually less *Doctor Who* because it doesn't have the same heart to it...

It's slavish to the iconography of it, but it's not really telling the same sort of story.

It's not really telling *any* sort of story, that's what's wrong with it! I mean, to me it seems absolutely obvious and self-evident – but the TV Movie mentions Time Lords, the TARDIS, Daleks, Skaro, the Master... all in the first minute and a half. And again, brilliantly and perfectly cleverly, Russell bleeds this information out slowly, because, of course, it's *Doctor 'Who?'*, it's a mystery – why on Earth would you need all this information at once? I remember watching the TV Movie thinking I would have started like *An Unearthly Child*, because it was for a new audience. You start with a box that hums, and a strange man. That's all you need – and that's essentially what we got, this time round.

▶ *Reece Shearsmith, Steve Pemberton and Mark Gatiss in 2005 feature film **The League of Gentlemen's Apocalypse**.*

It was great that after the second episode, *The Unquiet Dead* more or less started from scratch, and that happened in *Aliens of London* and *Dalek* as well. You could watch them without having seen any previous episodes. Someone recently asked me why they had gone for single, self-contained episodes rather than serials, and I quoted one of Russell's comments that it would be offputting to viewers to have every new story open with the words 'Part One'... She replied, 'Oh, God, yeah – I don't want my TV trying to tell me what I'm doing this time next week!'

It's a funny thing, if you think about it, that what we've got now is the equivalent of *Horse of Destruction* or what have you – it's a different episode title every week, like it was in the William Hartnell years, rather than 'Part One', 'Part Two' and so on. I want to write *A Desperate Venture*!

Script Doctor

Some fans were worried about this 'change' in format – but I'd contend that by the time of *The Unquiet Dead*, you're not even noticing the format any more...

No, absolutely. There are times when I think it would have been nice... [tails off wistfully] I'm thinking particularly of Steven Moffat's story, which I loved and which really justified its two-part status, and that was kind of like an 'old' four-parter. But you can now tell an awful lot of story in 45 minutes. I think the only casualty, and it's not necessarily a bad thing, is the comparative lack of time you have for 'mystery'. If Russell had said to me at the first meeting that the explanation of the Gelth would be the Doctor saying 'It's gas! It's made of gas!' I'd have said that was too 'on the nose'. But in 45 minutes, you've got to be. Had it been a four-part story, you'd have had two episodes' worth of 'What on Earth is going on?' and then you'd start to explain it. But TV has moved on, and it's much more exciting, because there's no room for 'corridor shots'. With the best will in the world, some great *Doctor Who* stories are quite flabby, you could edit them down to make a really sharp script. Which I think is what we're trying to do now.

In terms of working in the mainstream, then, is *Doctor Who* the biggest thing you've been involved with? Though you've done plenty of acclaimed work, you've been more of a BBC Two, minority channel success thus far.

Oh yes. And you get paid more once you've written for BBC One! It's the biggest audience I've ever had, easily, 8.9 million. Not that I had people texting me the figures the day after ▶

▼ *Filming for **The Unquiet Dead**'s seance scene. "It's a healthy scare," insists Gatiss.*

▲ *David Tennant as the Doctor in* ***The Christmas Invasion...***

◀ *... and with Gatiss in the cast of BBC Four's* ***The Quatermass Experiment.***

◀ transmission, or anything, honest! Stop to think how many people that is... that is *a lot* of people. I got so many people saying 'I loved your episode' – people stop you in the street to tell you how much they liked it, it's amazing.

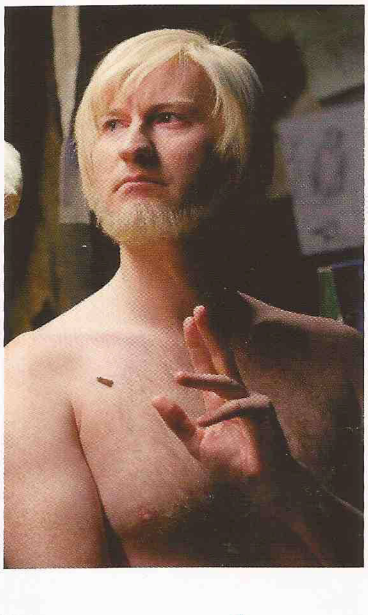
> "Thank God for the BBC publicity machine pushing it – it really made a difference with all those wonderful trailers and posters."

And now that it's come back and been a hit, what do you reckon to the future? Three years and out? 12 years? 26 years? Totally speculative, but I'm curious as to what you might think...

I'd love to think that it would last... you have to wonder, though, do things *always* have to decline? The lesson of history is that yes, they do, but the joy of *Doctor Who* having come back is that it's done by people who love it but who also know how to make it work in a new way. And so I suppose the future depends entirely on how long Russell stays, and then on what happens to it subsequently... I have no idea if Russell has plans to stay on the show in a sort of 'Phil Redmond, Godfather' sort of position, but it would be a bit odd for him to do three years and then for the BBC to offer it to Timmy Mallet or someone. The BBC loves a popular success, and at the moment *Doctor Who* is as big as *Casualty*, it's a 7-8 million-viewer programme...

And even bigger than that in terms of impact.

...and the product itself – you don't have a walking, talking 'Charlie Fairhead' or 'Nurse From *Casualty*' action figure...



◀ *Gatiss in the recent quirky BBC drama* ***Funland.***

And you can't walk round the set of *Holby City* on Brighton pier!

No – though I've proposed that idea! [laughs] But look at the history of *Doctor Who*: at the end of the 1960s the ratings were dropping, and the BBC wanted to replace it with a new *Quatermass*. That didn't work out, so they brought *Doctor Who* back, with Jon Pertwee who made it a *huge* success. By the time Tom Baker took over, it was a healthy programme and they were happy for it to continue. So it's just a matter of who can keep doing it. But it's amazing to have the Doctor back in the world – back in the universe! – on Saturday nights. It could so easily have gone wrong. Thank God for the BBC publicity machine pushing it, it really made a difference, all those wonderful teaser trailers. A lot of great things that are made just aren't watched, so '*Doctor Who*' as we know it now could easily have just not happened.

So many shows start off with impressive figures, but then drop off as people lose interest...

Yes, so it's a marvellous thing that the audience stayed for *Doctor Who*, the ratings stayed fairly consistent. Though, of course, ratings are all nonsense!

Yes, but it's nice, for a change, to be saying so from a position of strength, rather than having to argue that 6.6 million for Part Four of *The Greatest Show in the Galaxy* represented something impressive...

Oh of course. It's good to be on that side of the fence again! DWM

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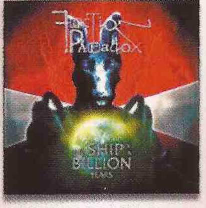
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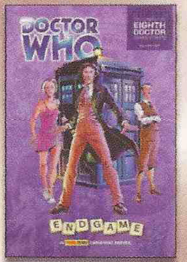
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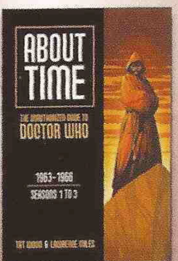
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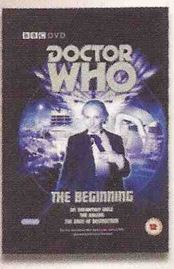
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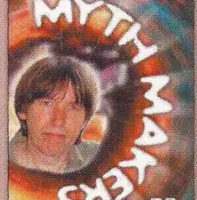
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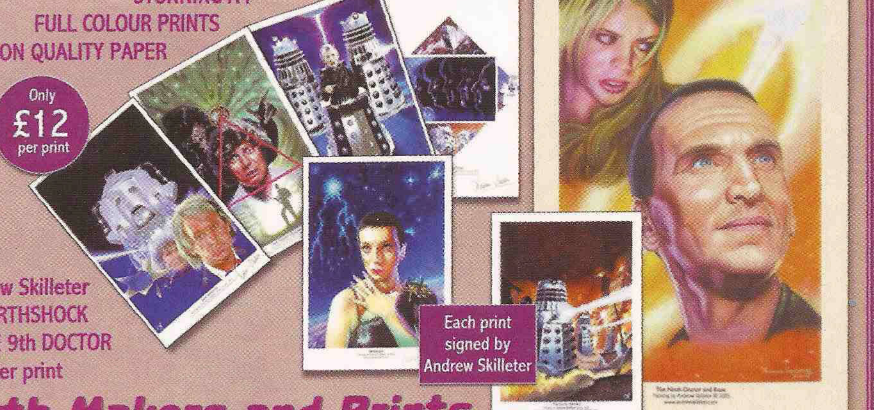

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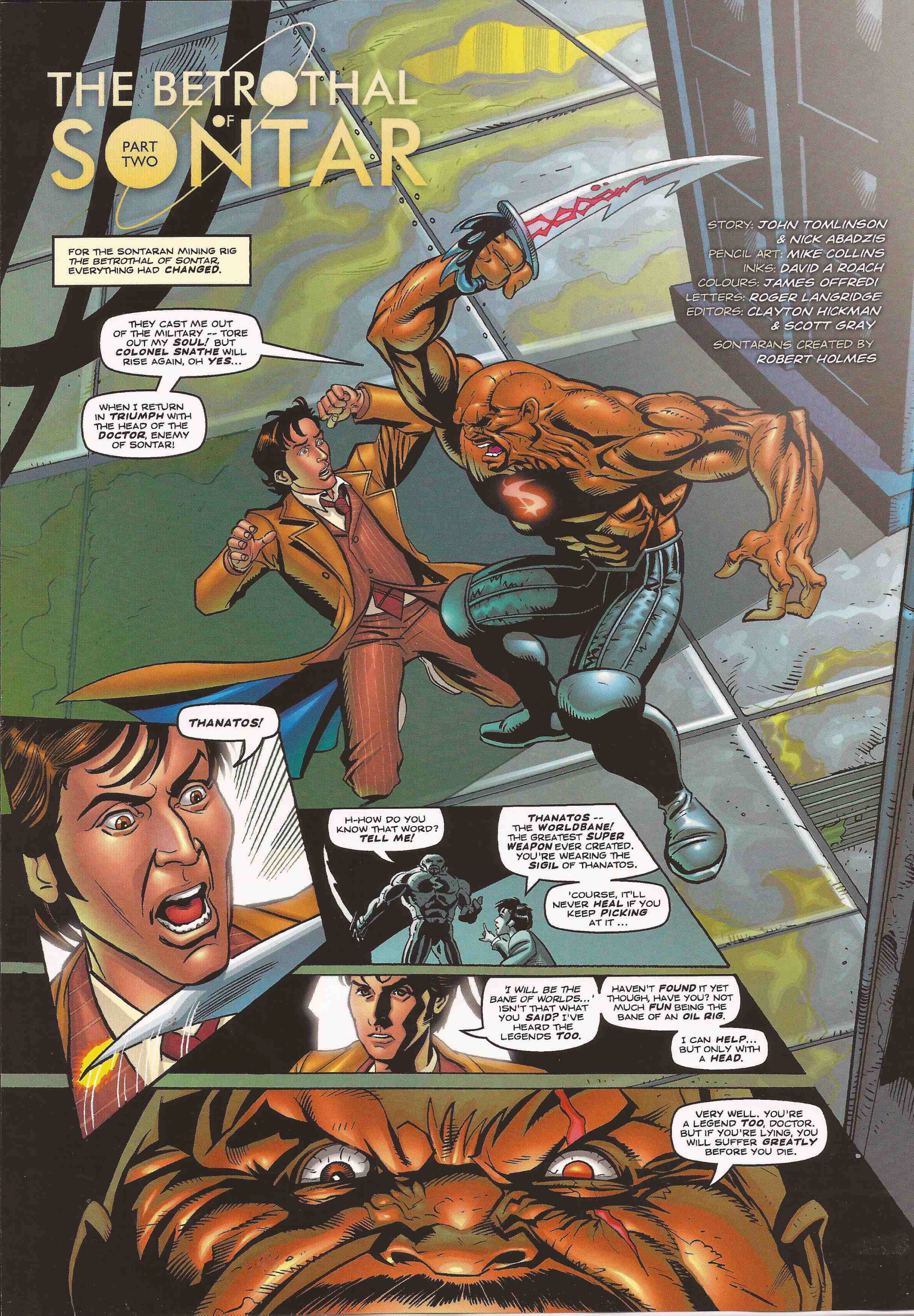
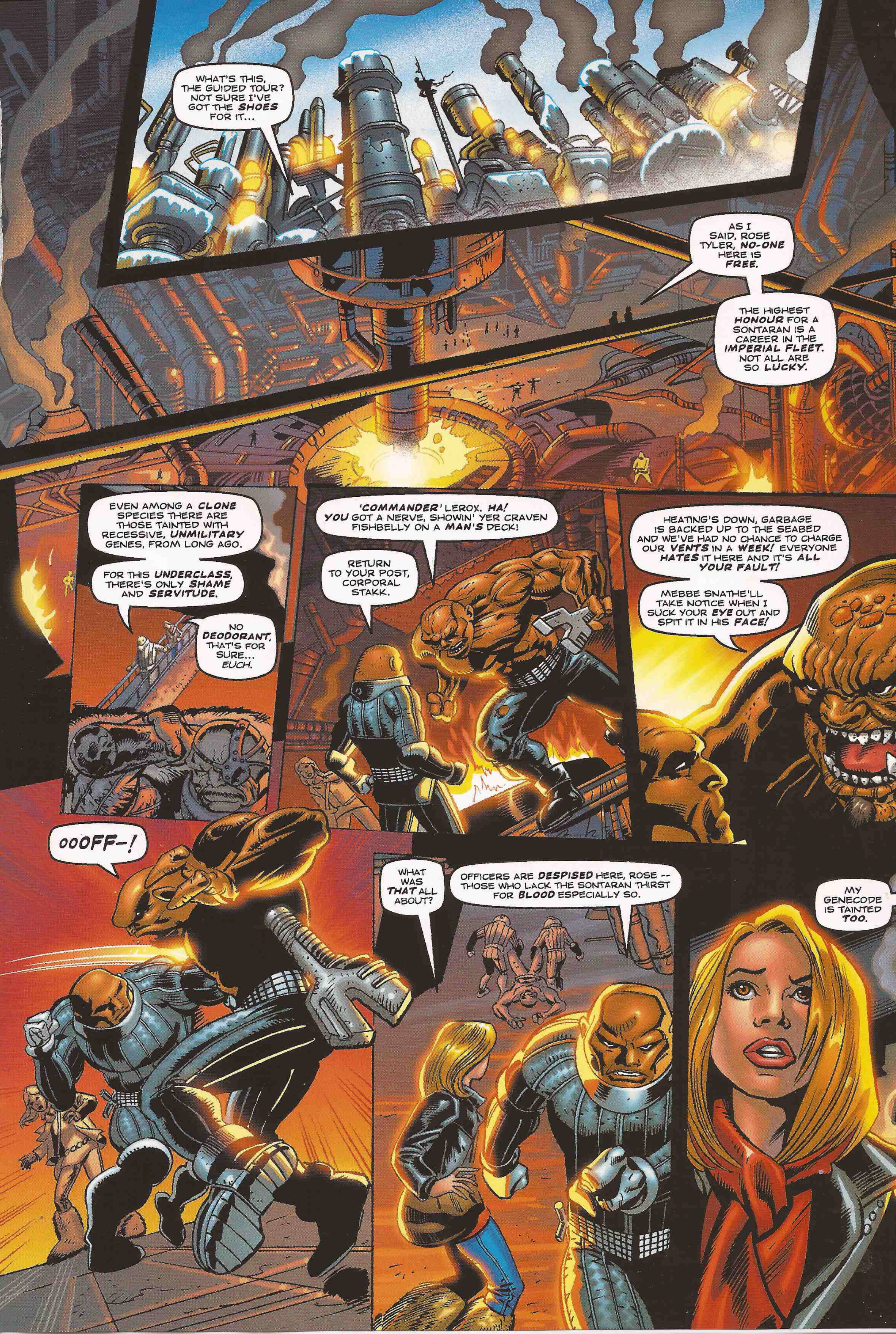
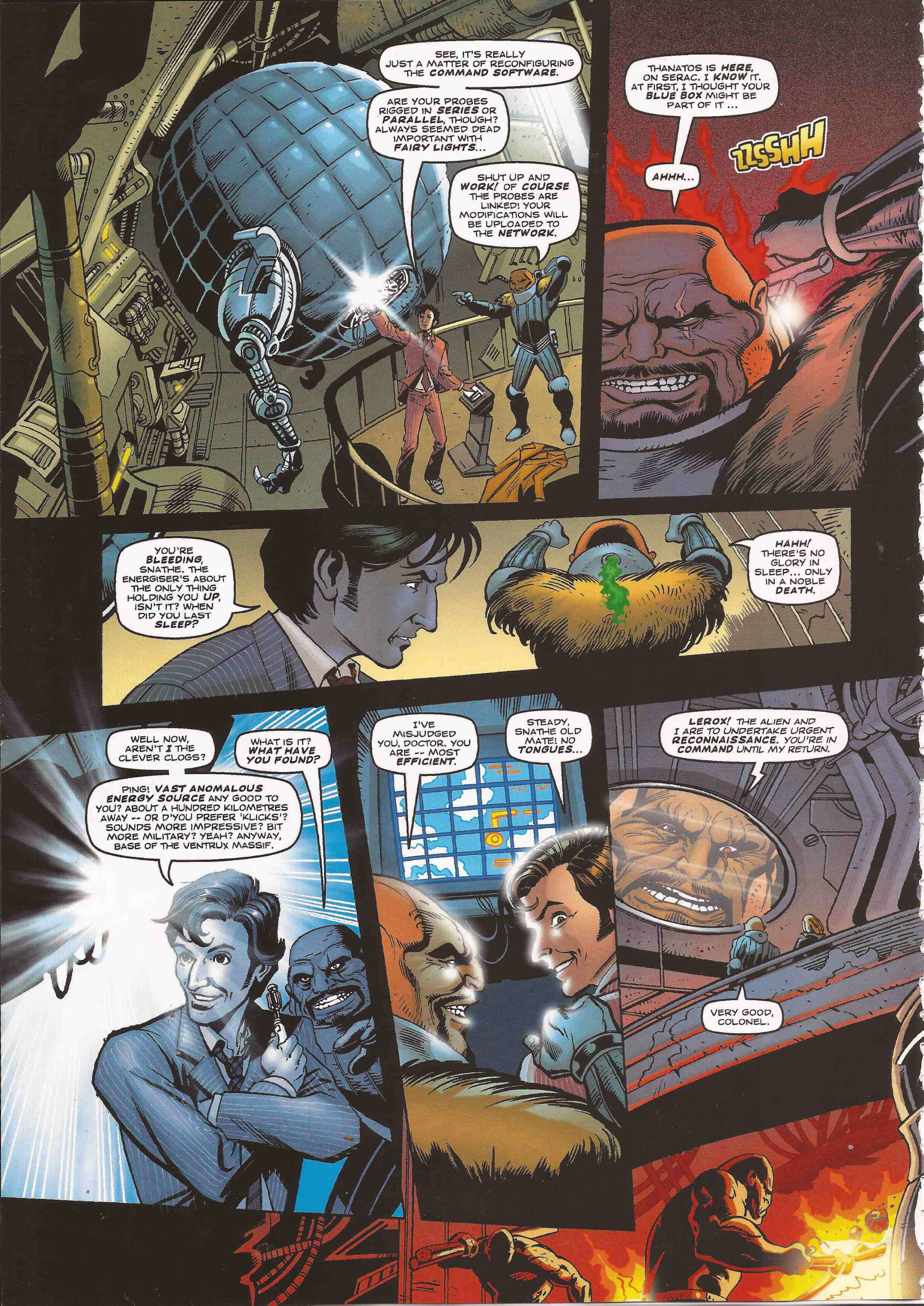
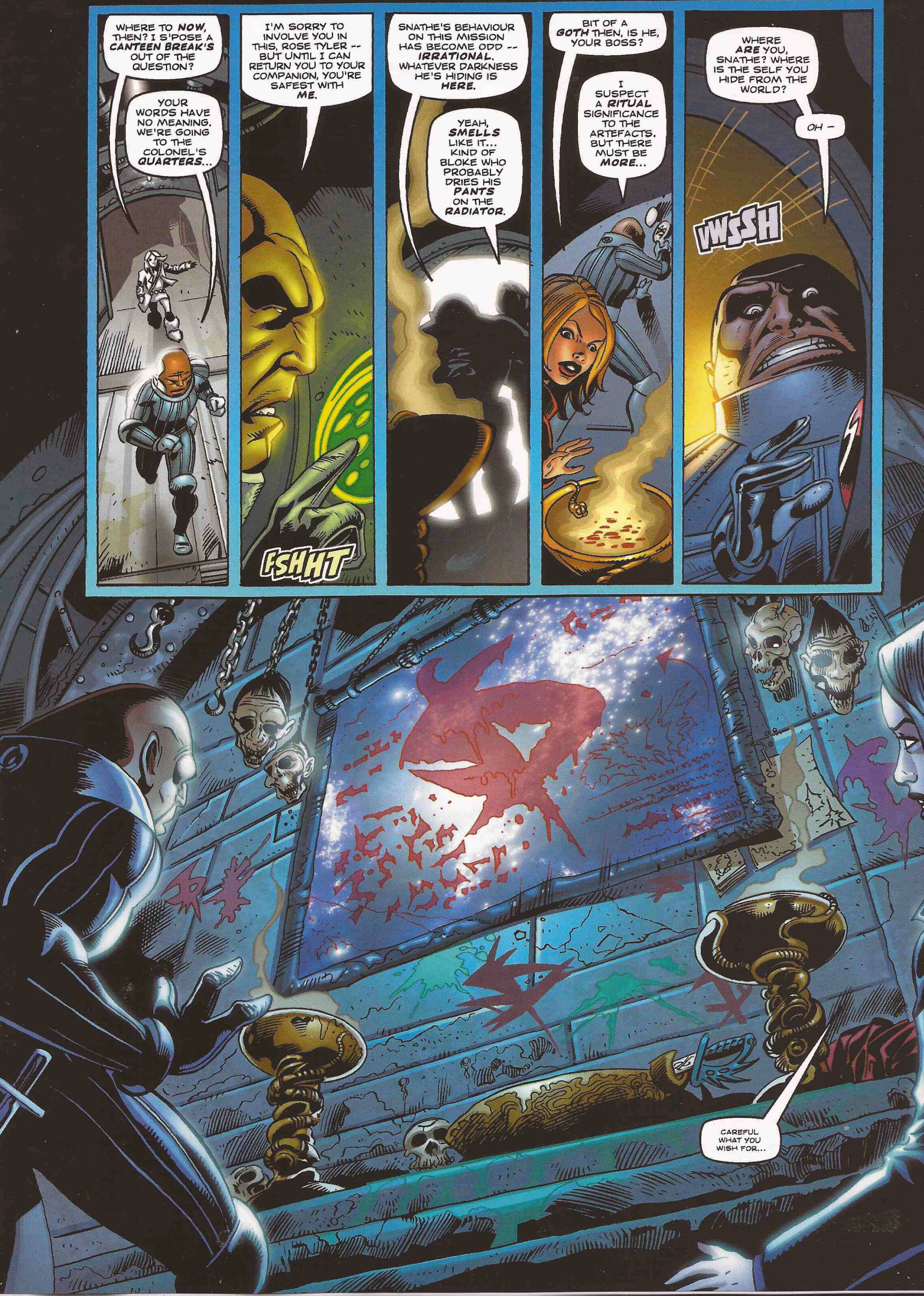
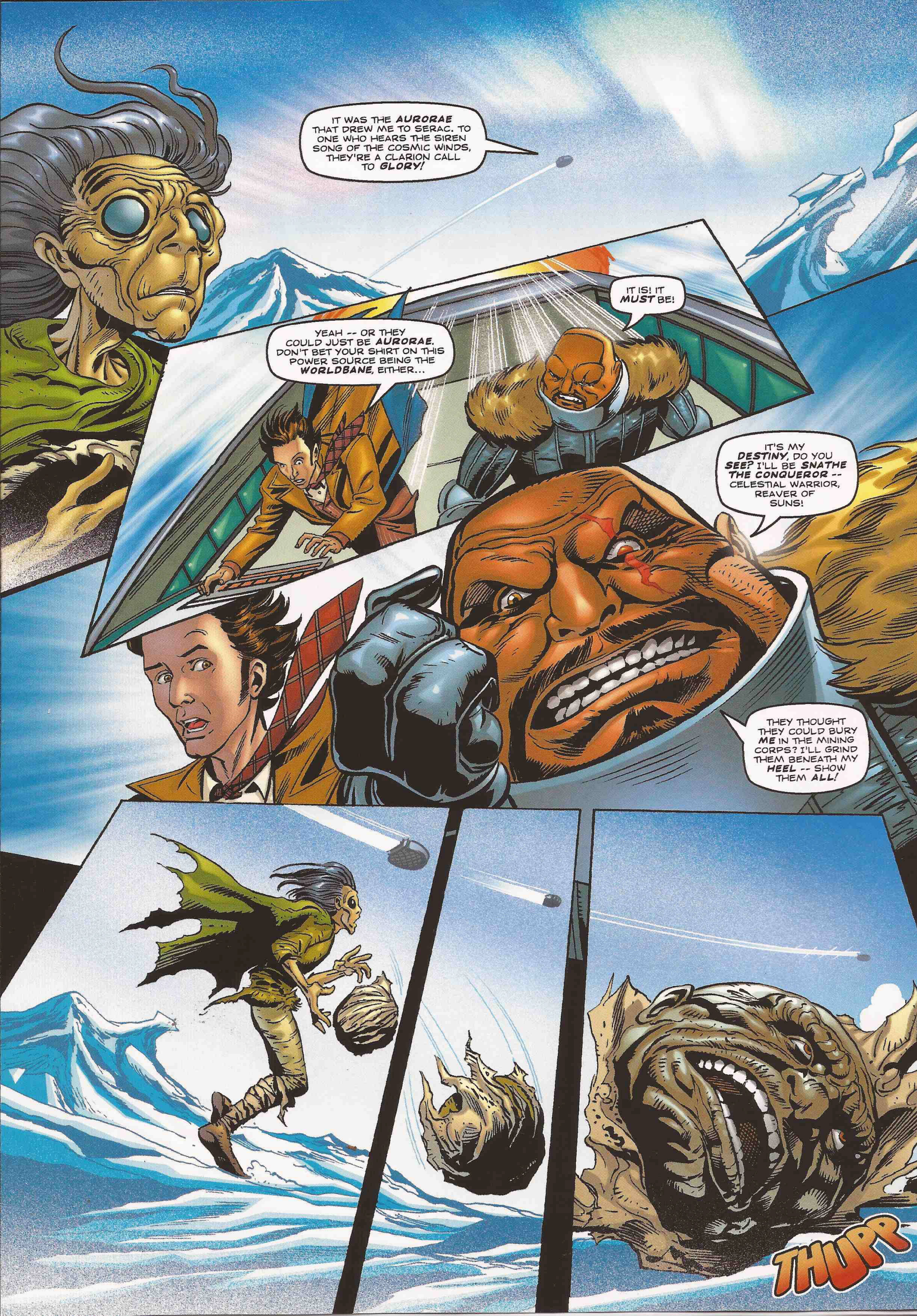
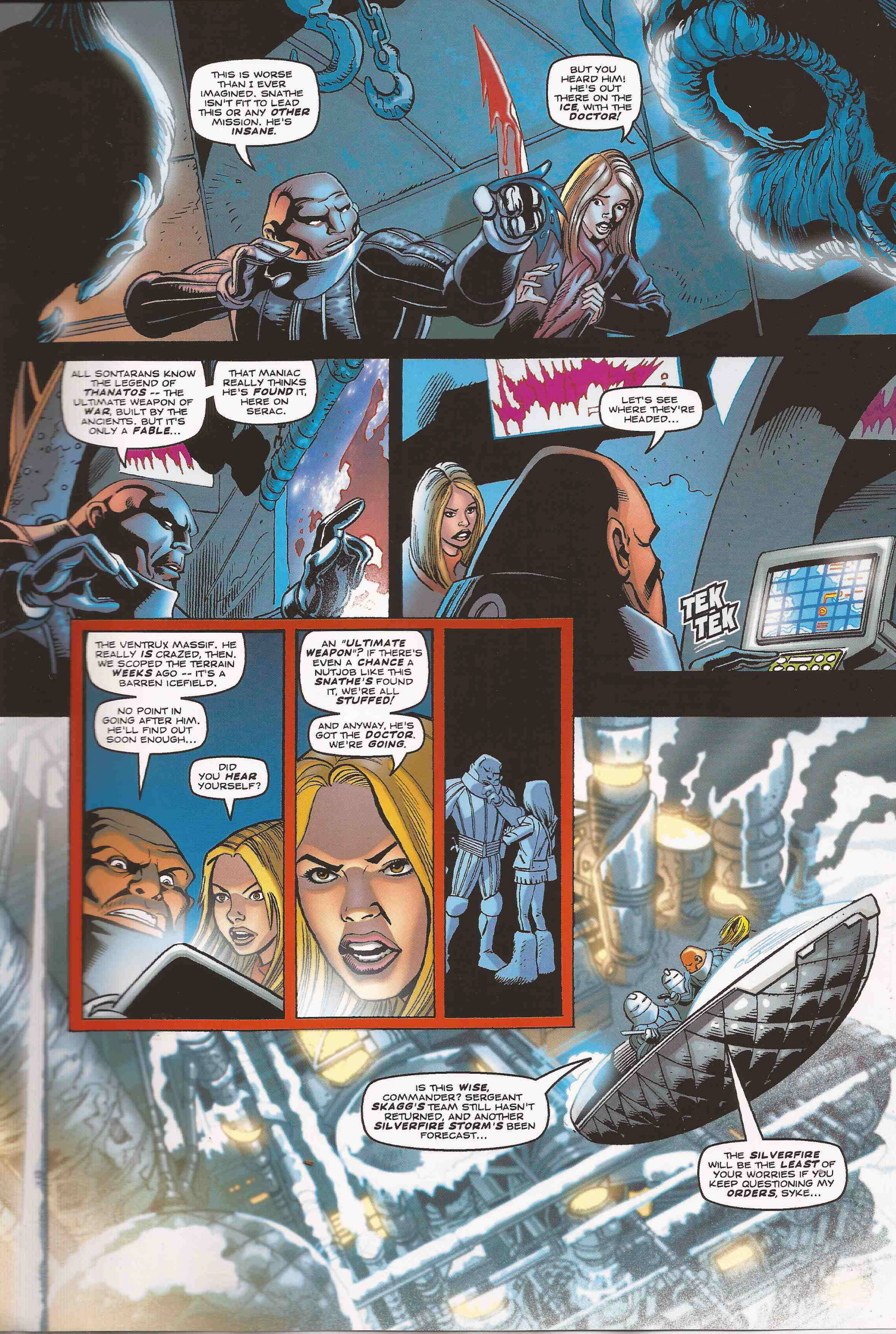

FOR THE SONTARAN MINING RIG *THE BETROTHAL OF SONTAR*, EVERYTHING HAD **CHANGED**.
THEY CAST ME OUT OF THE MILITARY -- TORE OUT MY **SOUL!** BUT **COLONEL SNATHE** WILL RISE AGAIN, OH **YES...**
WHEN I RETURN IN **TRIUMPH** WITH THE HEAD OF THE **DOCTOR**, ENEMY OF SONTAR!
THANATOS!
H-HOW DO YOU KNOW THAT WORD? **TELL ME!**
THANATOS -- THE **WORLDBANE!** THE GREATEST **SUPER WEAPON** EVER CREATED. YOU'RE WEARING THE **SIGIL** OF THANATOS.
'COURSE, IT'LL NEVER **HEAL** IF YOU KEEP **PICKING** AT IT ...
'I WILL BE THE BANE OF WORLDS...' ISN'T THAT WHAT YOU **SAID?** I'VE HEARD THE LEGENDS **TOO**.
HAVEN'T **FOUND** IT YET THOUGH, HAVE YOU? NOT MUCH **FUN** BEING THE BANE OF AN **OIL RIG**.
I CAN **HELP**... BUT ONLY WITH A **HEAD**.
VERY WELL. YOU'RE A LEGEND **TOO**, DOCTOR. BUT IF YOU'RE LYING, YOU WILL SUFFER **GREATLY** BEFORE YOU DIE.

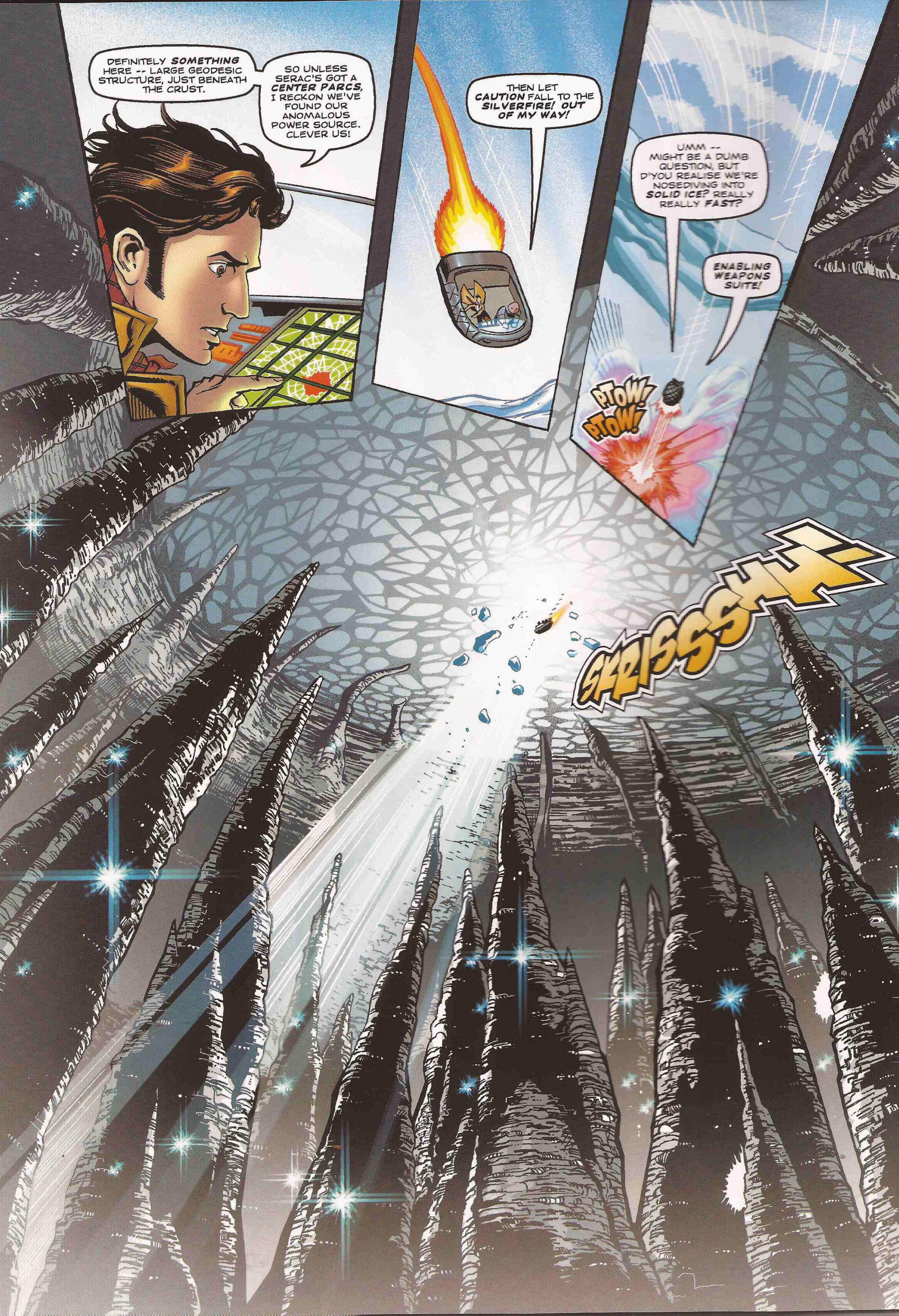

WHAT'S THIS, THE GUIDED TOUR? NOT SURE I'VE GOT THE **SHOES** FOR IT...
AS I SAID, ROSE TYLER, **NO-ONE** HERE IS **FREE**.
THE HIGHEST **HONOUR** FOR A SONTARAN IS A CAREER IN THE **IMPERIAL FLEET**. NOT ALL ARE SO **LUCKY**.
EVEN AMONG A **CLONE** SPECIES THERE ARE THOSE TAINTED WITH RECESSIVE, **UNMILITARY** GENES, FROM LONG AGO.
FOR THIS **UNDERCLASS**, THERE'S ONLY **SHAME** AND **SERVITUDE**.
NO **DEODORANT**, THAT'S FOR SURE... EUCH.
'COMMANDER' LEROX. **HA! YOU** GOT A NERVE, SHOWIN' YER CRAVEN FISHBELLY ON A **MAN'S** DECK!
RETURN TO YOUR POST, CORPORAL STAKK.
HEATING'S DOWN, GARBAGE IS BACKED UP TO THE SEABED AND WE'VE HAD NO CHANCE TO CHARGE OUR **VENTS** IN A **WEEK**! EVERYONE **HATES** IT HERE AND IT'S **ALL YOUR FAULT**!
MEBBE SNATHE'LL TAKE NOTICE WHEN I SUCK YOUR **EYE** OUT AND SPIT IT IN HIS **FACE**!
OOOFF-!
WHAT WAS **THAT** ALL ABOUT?
OFFICERS ARE **DESPISED** HERE, ROSE -- THOSE WHO LACK THE SONTARAN THIRST FOR **BLOOD** ESPECIALLY SO.
MY GENECODE IS TAINTED **TOO**.

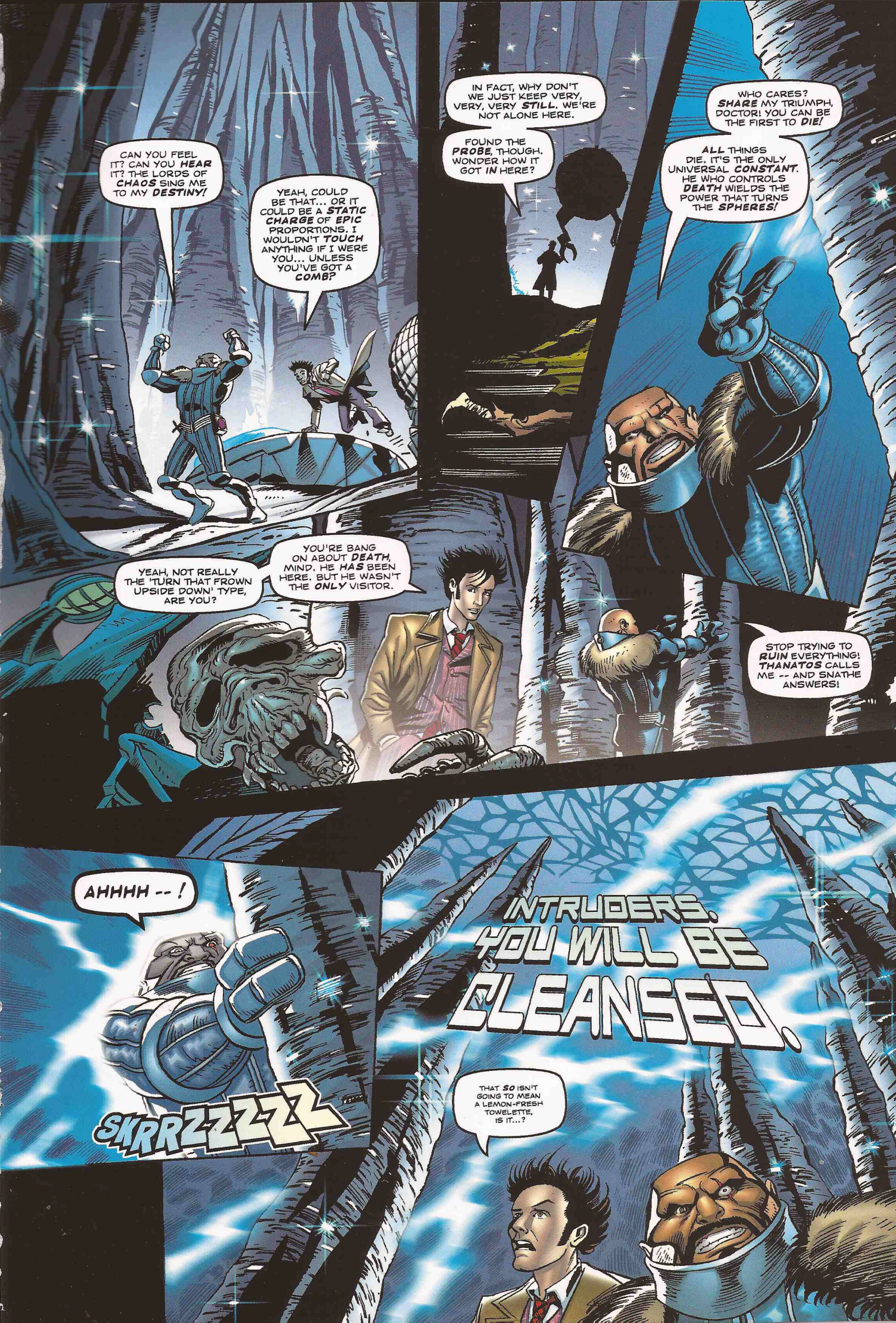

SEE, IT'S REALLY JUST A MATTER OF RECONFIGURING THE **COMMAND SOFTWARE**.
ARE YOUR PROBES RIGGED IN **SERIES** OR **PARALLEL**, THOUGH? ALWAYS SEEMED DEAD IMPORTANT WITH **FAIRY LIGHTS**...
SHUT UP AND **WORK!** OF **COURSE** THE PROBES ARE LINKED! YOUR MODIFICATIONS WILL BE UPLOADED TO THE **NETWORK**.
THANATOS IS **HERE**, ON SERAC. I **KNOW** IT. AT FIRST, I THOUGHT YOUR **BLUE BOX** MIGHT BE PART OF IT ...
ZZSSHH
AHHH...
YOU'RE **BLEEDING**, SNATHE. THE ENERGISER'S ABOUT THE ONLY THING HOLDING YOU **UP**, ISN'T IT? WHEN DID YOU LAST **SLEEP**?
HAHH! THERE'S NO GLORY IN SLEEP... ONLY IN A NOBLE **DEATH**.
WELL NOW, AREN'T **I** THE CLEVER CLOGS?
WHAT IS IT? **WHAT HAVE YOU FOUND?**
PING! **VAST ANOMALOUS ENERGY SOURCE** ANY GOOD TO YOU? ABOUT A HUNDRED KILOMETRES AWAY -- OR D'YOU PREFER 'KLICKS'? SOUNDS MORE IMPRESSIVE? BIT MORE MILITARY? YEAH? ANYWAY, BASE OF THE VENTRUX MASSIF.
I'VE MISJUDGED YOU, DOCTOR. YOU ARE -- MOST **EFFICIENT**.
STEADY, SNATHE OLD MATE! NO **TONGUES**...
LEROX! THE ALIEN AND I ARE TO UNDERTAKE URGENT **RECONNAISSANCE**. YOU'RE IN **COMMAND** UNTIL MY RETURN.
VERY GOOD, COLONEL.

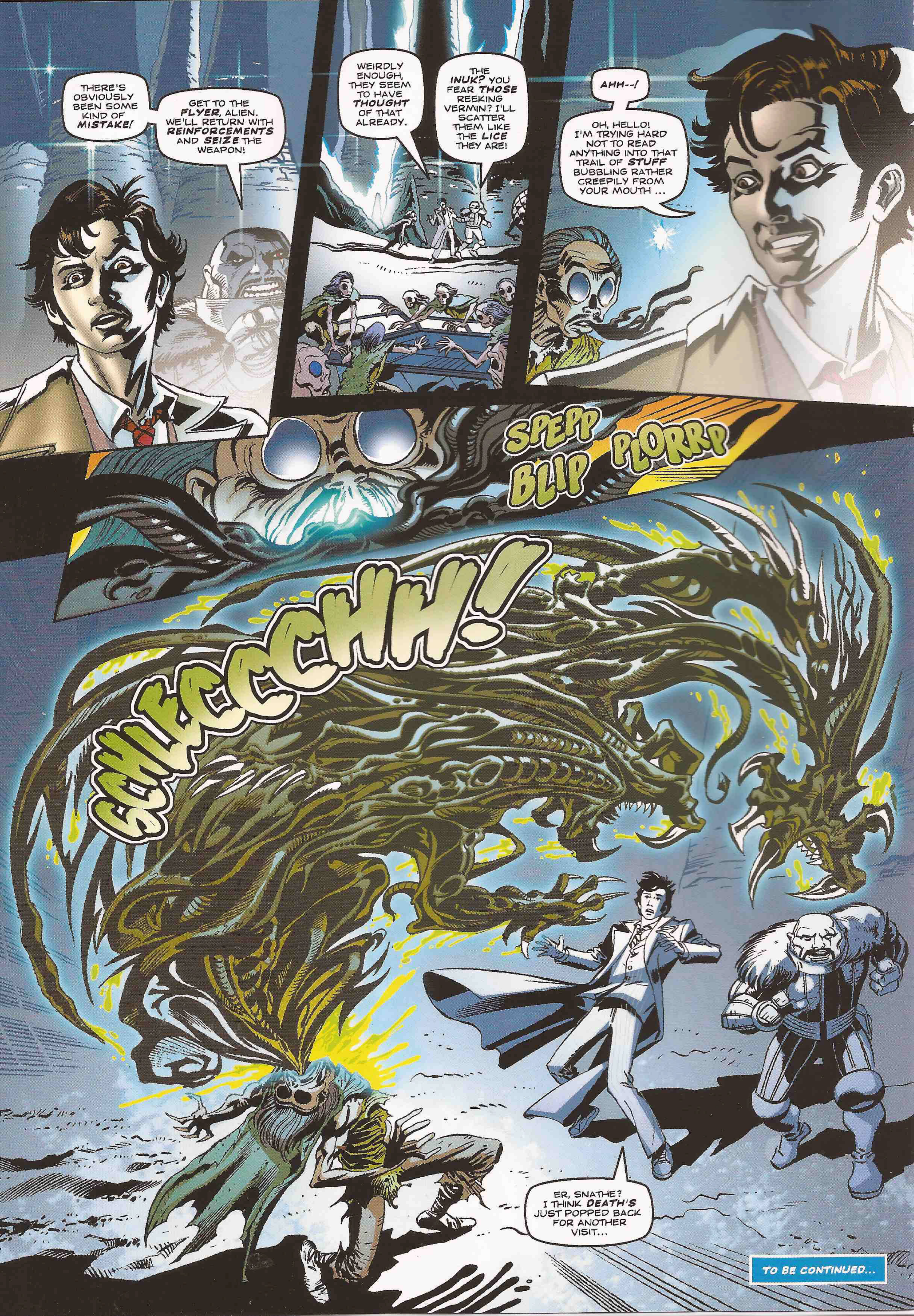

WHERE TO NOW, THEN? I S'POSE A CANTEEN BREAK'S OUT OF THE QUESTION?
YOUR WORDS HAVE NO MEANING. WE'RE GOING TO THE COLONEL'S QUARTERS...
I'M SORRY TO INVOLVE YOU IN THIS, ROSE TYLER -- BUT UNTIL I CAN RETURN YOU TO YOUR COMPANION, YOU'RE SAFEST WITH ME.
FSHHT
SNATHE'S BEHAVIOUR ON THIS MISSION HAS BECOME ODD -- IRRATIONAL. WHATEVER DARKNESS HE'S HIDING IS HERE.
YEAH, SMELLS LIKE IT... KIND OF BLOKE WHO PROBABLY DRIES HIS PANTS ON THE RADIATOR.
BIT OF A GOTH THEN, IS HE, YOUR BOSS?
I SUSPECT A RITUAL SIGNIFICANCE TO THE ARTEFACTS. BUT THERE MUST BE MORE...
WHERE ARE YOU, SNATHE? WHERE IS THE SELF YOU HIDE FROM THE WORLD?
OH –
VWSSH
CAREFUL WHAT YOU WISH FOR...


IT WAS THE AURORAE THAT DREW ME TO SERAC. TO ONE WHO HEARS THE SIREN SONG OF THE COSMIC WINDS, THEY'RE A CLARION CALL TO GLORY!
YEAH -- OR THEY COULD JUST BE AURORAE. DON'T BET YOUR SHIRT ON THIS POWER SOURCE BEING THE WORLDBANE, EITHER...
IT IS! IT MUST BE!
IT'S MY DESTINY, DO YOU SEE? I'LL BE SNATHE THE CONQUEROR -- CELESTIAL WARRIOR, REAVER OF SUNS!
THEY THOUGHT THEY COULD BURY ME IN THE MINING CORPS? I'LL GRIND THEM BENEATH MY HEEL -- SHOW THEM ALL!
THUPP


THIS IS WORSE THAN I EVER IMAGINED. SNATHE ISN'T FIT TO LEAD THIS OR ANY *OTHER* MISSION. HE'S *INSANE*.
BUT YOU HEARD HIM! HE'S OUT THERE ON THE *ICE*, WITH THE *DOCTOR!*
ALL SONTARANS KNOW THE LEGEND OF *THANATOS* -- THE ULTIMATE WEAPON OF *WAR*, BUILT BY THE ANCIENTS. BUT IT'S ONLY A *FABLE*...
THAT MANIAC REALLY THINKS HE'S *FOUND* IT, HERE ON SERAC.
LET'S SEE WHERE THEY'RE HEADED...
TEK TEK
THE VENTRUX MASSIF. HE REALLY *IS* CRAZED, THEN. WE SCOPED THE TERRAIN *WEEKS* AGO -- IT'S A BARREN ICEFIELD.
NO POINT IN GOING AFTER HIM. HE'LL FIND OUT SOON ENOUGH...
DID YOU *HEAR* YOURSELF?
AN "*ULTIMATE WEAPON*"? IF THERE'S EVEN A *CHANCE* A NUTJOB LIKE THIS *SNATHE'S* FOUND IT, WE'RE ALL *STUFFED!*
AND ANYWAY, HE'S GOT THE *DOCTOR*. WE'RE *GOING*.
IS THIS *WISE*, COMMANDER? SERGEANT *SKAGG'S* TEAM STILL HASN'T RETURNED, AND ANOTHER *SILVERFIRE STORM'S* BEEN FORECAST...
THE *SILVERFIRE* WILL BE THE *LEAST* OF YOUR WORRIES IF YOU KEEP QUESTIONING MY *ORDERS*, SYKE...


DEFINITELY **SOMETHING** HERE -- LARGE GEODESIC STRUCTURE, JUST BENEATH THE CRUST.
SO UNLESS SERAC'S GOT A **CENTER PARCS**, I RECKON WE'VE FOUND OUR ANOMALOUS POWER SOURCE. CLEVER US!
THEN LET **CAUTION** FALL TO THE **SILVERFIRE! OUT OF MY WAY!**
UMM -- MIGHT BE A DUMB QUESTION, BUT D'YOU REALISE WE'RE NOSEDIVING INTO **SOLID ICE?** REALLY REALLY **FAST?**
ENABLING WEAPONS SUITE!
P'TOW!
P'TOW!
SKRISSSSH!


CAN YOU FEEL IT? CAN YOU HEAR IT? THE LORDS OF CHAOS SING ME TO MY DESTINY!
YEAH, COULD BE THAT... OR IT COULD BE A STATIC CHARGE OF EPIC PROPORTIONS. I WOULDN'T TOUCH ANYTHING IF I WERE YOU... UNLESS YOU'VE GOT A COMB?
IN FACT, WHY DON'T WE JUST KEEP VERY, VERY, VERY STILL. WE'RE NOT ALONE HERE.
FOUND THE PROBE, THOUGH. WONDER HOW IT GOT IN HERE?
WHO CARES? SHARE MY TRIUMPH, DOCTOR! YOU CAN BE THE FIRST TO DIE!
ALL THINGS DIE. IT'S THE ONLY UNIVERSAL CONSTANT. HE WHO CONTROLS DEATH WIELDS THE POWER THAT TURNS THE SPHERES!
YEAH, NOT REALLY THE 'TURN THAT FROWN UPSIDE DOWN' TYPE, ARE YOU?
YOU'RE BANG ON ABOUT DEATH, MIND. HE HAS BEEN HERE. BUT HE WASN'T THE ONLY VISITOR.
STOP TRYING TO RUIN EVERYTHING! THANATOS CALLS ME -- AND SNATHE ANSWERS!
AHHHH -- !
SKRRZZZZZ
INTRUDERS. YOU WILL BE CLEANSED.
THAT SO ISN'T GOING TO MEAN A LEMON-FRESH TOWELETTE, IS IT...?


THERE'S OBVIOUSLY BEEN SOME KIND OF MISTAKE!
GET TO THE FLYER, ALIEN. WE'LL RETURN WITH REINFORCEMENTS AND SEIZE THE WEAPON!
WEIRDLY ENOUGH, THEY SEEM TO HAVE THOUGHT OF THAT ALREADY.
THE INUK? YOU FEAR THOSE REEKING VERMIN? I'LL SCATTER THEM LIKE THE LICE THEY ARE!
AHH--!
OH, HELLO! I'M TRYING HARD NOT TO READ ANYTHING INTO THAT TRAIL OF STUFF BUBBLING RATHER CREEPILY FROM YOUR MOUTH ...
SPEPP
BLIP
PLORRP
SCHLECCCHH!
ER, SNATHE? I THINK DEATH'S JUST POPPED BACK FOR ANOTHER VISIT...
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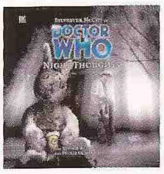

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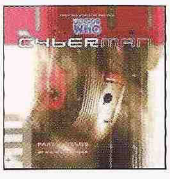

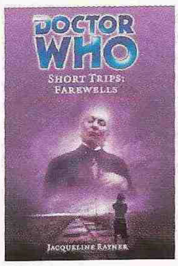

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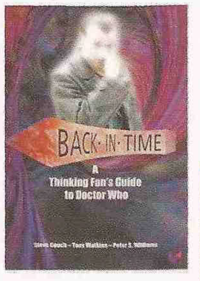

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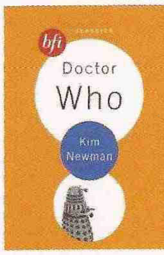

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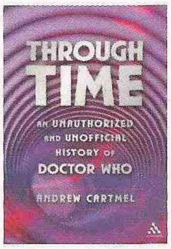

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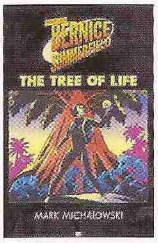

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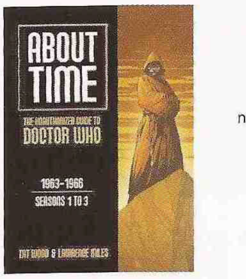

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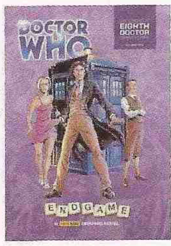

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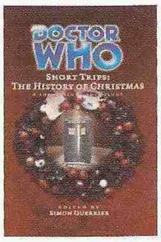

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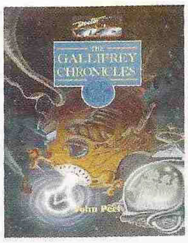

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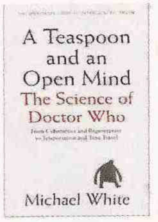

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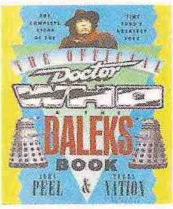

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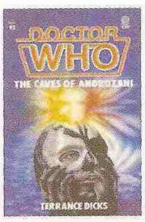

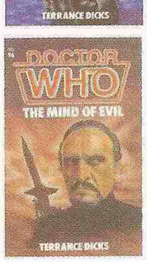

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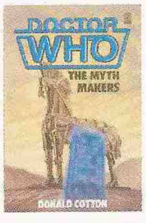

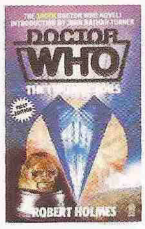

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42 YEARS OF DOCTOR W
17 YEARS OF QUALITY SERVICE AT BURTO

THE CHRISTMAS INVASION

Christmas Special 2005 | Written by RUSSELL T DAVIES | Directed by JAMES HAWES | Broadcast BBC One, Sunday 25 December 2005, 7pm

▲ *A Pilot Fish shows off its tromboning skills. Did they sew their own costumes, d'you think?*

RARELY HAS A SINGLE DOCTOR WHO EPISODE HAD TO CARRY so much. Not only the content – the first proper adventure for David Tennant's brand new Tenth Doctor. Not even being the centrepiece of BBC One's Christmas Day schedule – as if that wasn't nerve-wracking enough. No, *The Christmas Invasion* has had to carry the knowledge that the first series of *Doctor Who* was more successful than anyone could have dreamed. Knowing that lightning seldom strikes twice, many of Russell T Davies' *Production Notes* in **DWM** have stressed that he's approaching Series Two with the same trepidation as he approached *Rose*, aware there's a whole bunch of critics who love to cut success down to size, and who are already polishing their knives.

So it helped that *The Christmas Invasion* wasn't just the BBC's finest Christmas programme of 2005, but pretty much the best piece of Christmas TV we've had for a good many years. Leaving aside for a moment all the things that made this great *Doctor Who*, let's look at why it was such terrific festive viewing. It felt Christmassy for a start, which doesn't equate to a sprig of holly, some fake snow, a carol and a moral at the end, but all the paraphernalia of a British Christmas. Rose and Mickey's last-minute trawl round the over-decorated shops to pick up the presents they've forgotten, Jackie's stress about what Rose is going to eat on Christmas Day, the ubiquitous festive songs playing on the radio at Mickey's garage, the overcast weather. All that was missing was the gnawing sense of disappointment that a pair of socks and a *Best of Take That* CD weren't really the gifts you were hoping for. Like those classic comedy specials that are trotted out each and every year, *The Christmas Invasion* managed to be about Christmas without having to include a nauseatingly twee lesson. When Harriet Jones (Prime Minister) tells the Sycorax that it is a day of peace on Earth, the Christmas message is clear enough, uplifting without being trite.

But *The Christmas Invasion* had another job to do. It's never been easy for any series to ride out a change in lead actor, and, despite the brilliant convenience of regeneration, *Doctor Who* has been no exception. Like all the most successful 'new Doctor' episodes, *The Christmas Invasion* helps us cope with the change by placing the unknown in the midst of the familiar, returning the Doctor and Rose to the location of their second meeting, and surrounding them with friendly faces – Jackie, Mickey and Flydale North MP Harriet Jones, now Prime Minister. This extends to replicating many of the aspects of Christopher Eccleston's first episode, from the aliens attacking in a busy shopping centre to the opening zoom from outer space right into the Tylers' flat. As all long-time fans of the series know, new Doctors tend to suffer from post-regeneration stress, which usually manifests itself in erratic behaviour and long spells of recuperation. While this has sometimes been badly misjudged, forever tarring a Doctor with the

▶ *Harriet Jones (Penelope Wilton) is more than pleased to see Rose (Billie Piper).*

excesses of their first episode, Davies manages the Tenth Doctor's recovery well, writing a story that has much in common with those *Buffy* resurrection season-openers. Although he spends most of the episode unconscious, *The Christmas Invasion* is very much about the Doctor, almost defining itself by his absence. It's about how Rose and the Earth cope without him. A criticism levelled at the Ninth Doctor was that he didn't actually do very much – Rose defeated the Daleks, Charles Dickens stopped the Gelth, even Mickey prevented the Slitheen plan to destroy the world. *The Christmas Invasion* challenges us to consider what would have happened, though, had the Doctor not been present at these events, to act as a guide or an inspiration to the "stupid apes". Harriet Jones has an ace up her sleeve in the mysterious Torchwood (no doubt more will be revealed soon), but we are shown that this is not the best solution, or even necessarily the one that will warn off further invasions of Earth. Indeed, the new Doctor's confrontation with Harriet is a very brave move from Davies, pitching an already-loved character against the new boy and giving us no clear-cut moral answers – it seems there is right on both sides. Let's hope they can kiss and make up one day...

WHEN THE DOCTOR DOES RECOVER – BECAUSE OF THE restorative powers of a cup of tea, rather wonderfully – in time to confront the Sycorax, we're presented with a man with none of the grumpy uncertainty of his previous self. When Rose's garbled attempt at negotiating with the Sycorax fails (much as the Ninth Doctor's attempt to reason with the Nestene Consciousness founders), the new Doctor thinks nothing of ignoring the aliens to chat with his friends, before whacking the do-not-press button and challenging the Sycorax leader to a duel. This new Doctor is clever, confident, and thinks by talking. The jovial, flippant persona hides fire and steel. When he's double-crossed by the Sycorax leader, he destroys him, and the implication is he'll do the same for Harriet Jones' career. He's a dangerous but likeable individual very different from any of his predecessors, and nailed beautifully by David Tennant, whose self-assured performance has all of the cocky charm of his Casanova, without being a mere re-run.

As always, we shouldn't underestimate Billie Piper as Rose. Carrying the majority of the episode, Piper goes through a journey with the audience, losing confidence in the debilitated Doctor and ready to hide from the Sycorax inside the TARDIS because she doesn't know what to do without her best friend by her side. That Rose rediscovers her own nerve and courage in time to confront the aliens, and is ready to rejoin the new Doctor in his travels is typical of her bravery and commitment. Although Rose and the Doctor share very little (conscious!) screen time in *The Christmas Invasion*, there is a real sense of acceptance between the two at its conclusion. Though how their relationship will change and develop is left deliciously unclear, acting as a major hook for Series Two.

▲ *Not your common-or-garden Christmas tree...*

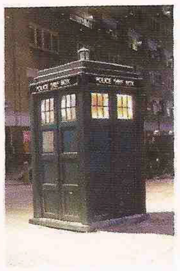
◀ *Top: Rose wakes the new Doctor (David Tennant) too soon.*

◀ *Left: Sean Gilder as the scary Sycorax leader.*

The story rightly takes second place to the characters in this episode, although it's a perfectly good example of *Doctor Who*'s staple, the 'Earth in danger' plot. The misdirection of the tin Santas, who featured so heavily in the promotional material for the episode, despite disappearing within the first 20 minutes, is magnificent chutzpah. The domesticity of the first third of the episode, which includes the time-honoured *Doctor Who* trick of finding terror in the everyday with the killer Christmas tree, gives way to the tense, siege mentality of the middle section (set in a secret UNIT bunker located, thrillingly, under the Tower of London) that focuses on Penelope Wilton's lovely PM, Harriet Jones. The zombified citizens marching to the nearest high building ready to throw themselves off is a stark, scary image – perhaps one of the most disturbing that the series has ever offered. The final part of the episode is set aboard the impressively cavernous Sycorax spaceship, uniting all of the characters and providing a suitably dramatic backdrop to the Doctor's return to form.

The special effects are largely convincing, and there's a feeling that the production team had a bit more money to spend. There are some fantastic moments, with the arrival of the Sycorax ship accompanied by every window in London shattering being the most brilliant, and some lovely blink-and-you'll-miss-'em touches such as Big Ben clad in building work following *Aliens of London*, and our first glimpse of the astonishing TARDIS wardrobe room. The muscle-and-bone Sycorax, and the tin-faced Santas look great as well. Combined with the steaming skeletons on the ship, and the deadly tree, there's plenty to send young kids scuttling behind the sofa, while Davies' jokes, particularly Harriet Jones' recurring desire to give her full job description (even the Sycorax leader knows who she is), keep the adults properly engaged in the story.

> "*The Christmas Invasion* challenges us to consider what would happen if the Doctor wasn't around to guide or inspire us..."



▲ *Top: One of Doctor Who's most disturbing images?*

▲ *Above: It's not snow, it's ash...*

For the sake of balance, let's point out the oddness of the Pilot Fish being able to get a large killer tree inside Jackie's flat without being able to get the sleeping Doctor out (and what's with their Christmas obsession anyway?), and the fact that the two separate races of aliens seem to be using the same teleporters (or is the implication that the Pilot Fish live in the Sycorax's spare room but sneak out on missions of their own?). But let's also acknowledge that *The Christmas Invasion* was a fantastic piece of Christmas TV, a great introduction for the new Doctor, and an encouraging hint of things to come. And doesn't the Series Two trailer look *brilliant*?

MATT MICHAEL (ginger and not rude) DWM

JAC
RICHARD
PETER
CLAY

In 1999, four intrepid fans embarked on a televisual quest: to watch every episode of **Doctor Who**. All 710 of them. In order. From the start.

This is the ongoing story of...

THE TIME TEAM

CLICHÉ COUNTER

DEATHS ON SCREEN SO FAR

00823

ONE OR MORE REGULARS RENDERED UNCONSCIOUS

00160

ONE OR MORE REGULARS INCARCERATED

00213

THERE'S SOMETHING VERY, VERY ODD in Jac's hand. The other Time Teamers stare curiously at the strange alien object.

"It's vaguely familiar," says Clay.

"I'm sure it's a prop from *Doctor Who*," says Peter.

"It's Erato's translator!" cries Richard. "Jac, where on earth did you get that?"

Jac smiles and admits proudly, "It's not the actual one. It's a copy. My friend Stephen bought it at a convention. Today we can all play with it!"

I remind the Time Team that they have been a bit rowdy of late, and that taking it in turns to touch Erato's speaking knob when they have something to say will be a lot easier on my rusty shorthand. 'Rusty Shorthand' immediately becomes my nickname. Damn.

On with the show! And Part One of *The Creature from the Pit*. Richard leaps for the speaking knob. "Great title! I wonder if it's going to be anything like *Quatermass and the Pit*?"

"From the look of it, no," says Peter.

"Touch the knob!" shrieks Jac.

Peter grabs it. "It's looking good so far. The Doctor and Romana have landed on a suitably lush jungle planet. The set is amazing, one of the best ever planets. Not sure about K9's voice, though..."

Jac summons the knob. "It's really hard to get used to David Brierley as the voice of K9. He just sounds very camp and petty. But Romana, as well as being beautiful and haughty and with stunning dress sense, also has an encyclopaedic knowledge of the work of Beatrix Potter. Isn't she wonderful? And while we're here, let's give a cheer for June Hudson. Superb costume design. This is my very favourite Romana outfit ever!"

Clay is clicking his fingers. Jac hands over the speaking knob at last, as Romana is ambushed by a gang of hairy forest footpads led by Torvin. "Sorry to be all serious," he says, "but these bandits are really unpleasant anti-semitic stereotypes. They have big noses, comedy Fagin accents and talk about money all the time. Rather uncomfortable viewing."

Jac and Peter nod, but Peter lightens the mood. "But isn't Romana fab when she's captured by them? So cool in the face of danger, so in control. What a lady!"

The Doctor, meanwhile, has been captured by the leather-clad Lady Adrasta and her whip-wielding henchman and threatened with being thrown into a certain Pit to meet a certain creature. So what does he do? He throws himself into the Pit!

"Genius cliffhanger!" says Clay. "It's the last thing you expect. I love the Doctor being so unpredictable!"

Part Two shows the Doctor clinging for dear life to the sides of said Pit. He has a guide book on climbing in his pocket. In Tibetan. So he whips out another book – *Teach Yourself Tibetan*. Richard goes for the knob. "It seems the rather gentler humour we had in *City of Death* has suddenly given way to more sledgehammer wit in this one."

"I enjoy a bit of sledgehammer wit with my *Who*," protests Peter. "And I love the idea of dimensionally transcendental pockets."

"And at least it *is* wit," says Jac. "I don't know why the Graham Williams stories are accused of being silly – they have a sense of fun, and a rather wonderful sense of the absurd too, but they still treat the stories seriously. And the dialogue recently has had a much higher overall standard too – Douglas Adams' influence, perhaps?"

The Doctor's reached the bottom of the Pit – look, here comes the Creature!

For a while, nobody wants to touch the speaking knob.

Then Richard plunges in. "Um... I can understand why they wanted to give the creature a protuberance of some sort, so there would at least be, er... a focal point."

"It's a great big willy," gawps Peter.

"With a great big... um, sack," adds Clay. "There are some things that just wouldn't – *couldn't* – appear on TV these days. And that protuberance is one of them. Good grief!"

Everybody boggles as the Doctor picks up the protuberance and – there's just no way to get around this – blows down it. "What the hell –?" exclaim Clay and Jac.

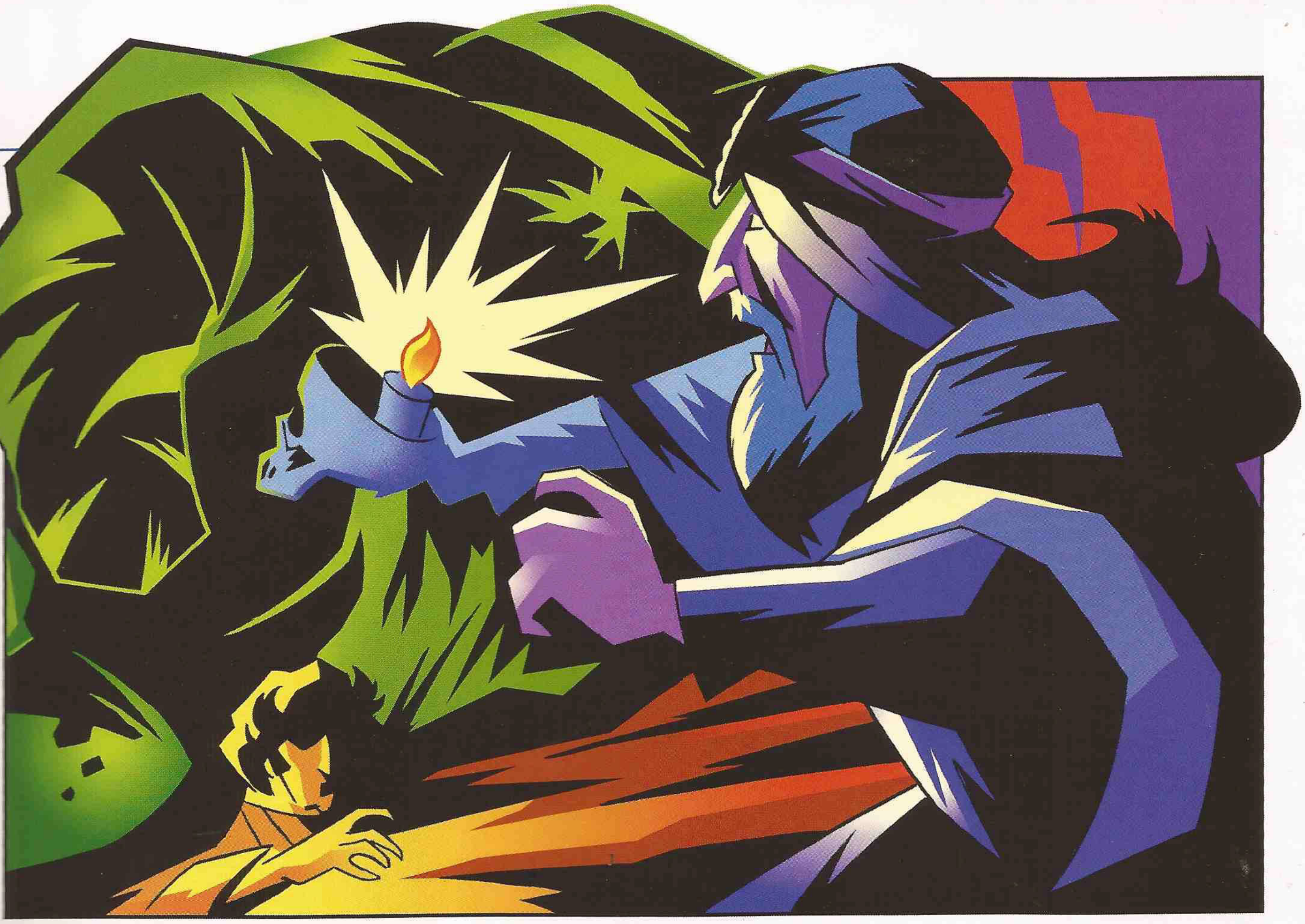
Peter looks sage. "You young people don't know it, but that's Tom taking the mickey out of 70s TV dog trainer Barbara Woodhouse. Her method to befriend any animal was to blow up its nose."

"That's *not* its nose!" shrieks Jac.

Thankfully, the Doctor is rescued at this point by Organon, an old soothsayer played by... "It's Catweazle! Oi, Catweazle, show us yer toad!" shouts Peter.

Organon explains how he was thrown down't pit by Lady Adrasta when her horoscope didn't come true. "Bit of a Binro the Heretic moment," notes Jac. "Organon knows his fortune telling is a big con, but he can't stop it because it's his trade. Good character. He also gets a couple of throwaway lines about other courts, and we have a planet – that's nice. Normally *Doctor Who* behaves as if the bit we're in is the entire world."

Meanwhile, Romana's in trouble at Adrasta's court with the wicked old Madam Karela, played by Eileen Way. "Eileen Way demands that Doctor's companion is killed with a knife. Hairy men, clad in furs, skulk about in the



EPISODES 514 TO 521

gloom. Meanwhile, the Doctor is trapped in a cave with a flaming skull. Cor, takes you right back to the very first story, doesn't it?" sighs a nostalgic Peter.

Then, at the end of Part Two, the cocky Creature looms towards the Doctor, so he... throws himself under it! "That's the second cliffhanger in a row the Doctor's done something suicidal. He's losing it!" reckons Peter.

But apparently the Creature is just misunderstood, and rather likes the Doctor tickling its tummy, or something. Richard tuts. "We've had a few stories of late which have a good central idea, but no real plot, and this seems to be another of them. Very little is actually happening here. The Doctor is condemned to death, leaps down the pit and spends most of the time wandering about."

> "There are some things that wouldn't – *couldn't* – appear on television nowadays, and that Creature, with its massive protuberance, is one of them!" CLAY

Jac nods. "There are a few bits in the story which aren't fantastically realised – a few threats that just don't seem very... well, threatening."

Clay has a particular point to make as Adrasta leads Romana and K9 into the pit to tackle the Creature. "Normally, a villain would say to Romana something like 'Girl – use the robot's beam against our enemy', but Adrasta says 'Romana – train K9's ray on the Creature!' You understand why that doesn't normally happen, as it sounds even more silly!"

Compiled by
MICHAEL PRITCHARD

Illustrations by
ADRIAN SALMON

Everybody boggles again as the Doctor tells Organon he was born under the Sign of Crossed Computers in the Gallifrey Maternity Ward. "That's really quite funny," says Jac. "And then he says Time Lords have 90 lives. That must just be an expression..." She's warming ever more to Lalla Ward's Romana. "She really sticks it to Lady Adrasta, enjoying herself hugely as an adventuress. She seems to be being deliberately melodramatic whenever there's a threat going on. I love her."

Part Three's cliffhanger has Adrasta forced by the Doctor to touch Erato's knob. His translator knob. "I like the way that Adrasta grabs hold of her throat, as if she's desperately trying to stop herself speaking the truth about imprisoning the Creature down the Pit."

"The mixing and the music are really spooky," says Clay. Jac forces him to touch her translator knob. "Sorry. Yes, it's a weird cliffhanger, the death of a villain, but very effective."

"Hmm," says Jac. "I'm disappointed that she's dead. Adrasta was a lovely villain with great make-up, but just not powerful enough – going to pieces at the end and being a bit rubbish. I prefer my evil a bit more ruthless and efficient."

"Hasta la vista, Lady Adrasta," mutters Clay. As we enter Part Four, Peter's concerned. "The story's over at the start of the final episode? Some mistake, surely?"

"A false ending!" cries Jac. "How exciting and unusual! What isn't Erato telling the Doctor?"

It turns out he's not telling the Doctor that a huge neutron star from his home planet Tythonus is coming to destroy Chloris. The Doctor and co rush back to the TARDIS and follow Erato out into space, where he wraps the star in a web and saves the day. Richard's not impressed. "The resolution with the neutron star and Erato rather tackily weaving an aluminium eggshell around it feels like a rather absurd addition to the script when they found it was under-running."

"Pah!" says Jac. "It was a nice twist. And the dialogue about the Doctor's lucky number is great, reminding us of the subtext about fortune telling and destiny." She sums up. "I enjoyed that hugely. I have a suspicion that the big green willy may have obscured the actual story for a few people."

"It was tremendous fun," says Clay. "Nothing earth-shattering, though." He takes his hand off the knob and turns to Jac. "Can we stop this now, please?"

WE'RE OUT INTO SPACE AGAIN WITH Part One of *Nightmare of Eden*. The passenger liner *Empress* is emerging from hyperspace when it crashes into the survey ship *Hecate*. But there isn't an explosion – the two ships become locked together!

The Doctor, Romana and K9 arrive on the *Empress* and inspect one of the overlapped areas. "What a great, simple science-fiction idea for a story!" raves Clay. "Really intriguing. Class stuff!"

Our heroes march on to the *Empress*' flight deck and meet Captain Rigg, and Dymond of the *Hecate*. "They're just diving right in," raves Jac. "They've no ▶

AND YOU SAID

THE CREATURE FROM THE PIT

"Adrasta clearly prefers a male 'courtier' to a female 'rival', so she flirts when the Doctor talks back but slaps Romana – something a male villain could never do."
ALEX WILCOX, ISLE OF DOGS

"The only times Tom Baker seems to settle down these days and actually play it seriously are when he's got a veteran actor he clearly respects, such as Geoffrey Bayldon, playing opposite him."
STEVE MANFRED, WISCONSIN, USA

"A few years ago the metal thieves would have been gritty, downtrodden and depressed. Now they're bungling, humorous and jovial. Which makes it a big surprise when their leader gets murdered."
STEPHEN MARTIN, HINCKLEY

"Interesting that even on a metal-scarce planet there are metal weapons!"
JIM WELKE, ILLINOIS, USA

"This is actually a good story – it's just spoiled slightly by an excess of comedy, some rather cheap sets and K9 being attacked by iceberg lettuces."
ROBERT KEELEY, E-MAIL

NIGHTMARE OF EDEN

"Maybe Lewis Fiander is actually doing a good accent here? Perhaps in some bizarre future time there will be a country full of half-German quarter-Welsh quarter-unknown offspring?"
STEVE MANFRED, WISCONSIN, USA

"This is only criticised for being childish and comical because of the stories around it – it's actually an incredibly mature tale and, in dealing with the drug theme, quite daring." **ROBERT KEELEY**

In **DWM** 368, The Time Team will be meeting the prickly *Meglos* and then taking a journey to E-Space in *Full Circle*. Send your thoughts on these stories to the usual address (see p10), or email us at *dwm@panini.co.uk* marked 'Time Team' in the subject line. Closing date is 1 March 2006.

◀ reason to be there or get involved, they're not even being accused of being responsible. All the old clichés are gone, hopefully forever."

Richard's not so sure, especially when Romana meets the *Empress*' most prominent passenger, the 'Germanic' naturalist Professor Tryst. "Good grief! It's the return of the silly comedy accent. Third story in a row with silly accents!" Tryst has a rather wonderful machine CET machine, which stores specimens by miniaturising them. "Isn't Tryst's CET machine just the Miniscope from *Carnival of Monsters*?" asks Richard.

"I wonder if he's got any decent monsters tucked away in it?" muses Peter.

Then the Doctor discovers the *Empress*' navigator Secker is a junkie, hooked on space drug vraxoin. "That's a really adult theme," comments Clay. "This script is great, but the production values – the accent, the brightness – let it down."

Jac agrees. "Is this really by Bob Baker? Has Dave Martin been dragging him down all these years? Because it's fab. Crime and thriller hour with a *Doctor Who* twist – drug runners, attacks, missing people – gripping."

And then it's the end of Part One, and time for the monsters to emerge from a matter interface aboard the ship – behold the fearsome Mandrels!

"Oh my God, it's Sooty!" cries Peter. "Oh, why can't they do decent monsters any longer? It's the whole point of the show!"

Part Two has the mystery thickening, as Romana strongly suspects the Mandrels have emerged from Tryst's CET machine. The Doctor decides the best way out of the problem is to separate the ships. And two rather striking leather-clad men in peaked caps arrive from the planet Azure.

> "Why can't the show do decent monsters any longer? The Mandrels are the worst for a long while..." **RICHARD**

"Where did they find them?" chokes Peter.

"Search me, dearie," sighs Clay.

"Oh, you need a few obstructive bureaucrats in a story like this," reckons Jac. "As layers of the story are peeled away, others are being added in their place. Luvverly."

"It's just a shame that the actors are sending it all up," says Clay. "Once they saw the Mandrels, it must have been hard keeping a straight face."

Part Three sees the Doctor and Romana jumping into Tryst's machine, and his 'recording' of the Mandrel home planet planet, Eden. "Now we get our first full-length look at the Mandrels, it just confirms what we feared all along," says Richard. "They have to be one of the worst monsters we've had in a long, long while."

"And that's up against some pretty stiff competition," sighs Peter. "Such a shame. The script is brilliant."

"Not sure," says Richard. "There's an excellent central concept in this story, but the execution of it in terms of how it's actually scripted, and how the dialogue and characters are used to convey the ideas really leaves me underwhelmed."

Jac and Clay disagree. "Oh. There's us in another camp, then," says Jac. "This is far and away the best Bob Baker story. Lots of mystery, lots of tension, and I do suspect that Douglas Adams has been having a hand in all this season." The Doctor electrocutes a Mandrel; and the powdery residue it crumbles into turns out to be vraxoin. "That is a great piece of writing, for example."

But it looks like the Doctor's discovery may die with him, as the cliffhanger to Part Three sees him torn between the separating ships. Richard's impressed with the story for once. "I like the way they've achieved the Doctor phasing out of existence at the end. Very effective. If only the rest of the production was up to that standard."

THE DOCTOR TURNS UP ON THE HECATE IN Part Four – and discovers Dymond is a drug smuggler. Turns out he's in cahoots with Tryst, who planned to beam the Eden recording containing the Mandrels over to him. The Doctor deals with the Mandrels by summoning them all back into the CET machine with K9's dog whistle and then disappears into some bushes with the cry of 'Ooh, my arms! My legs! My everything!'

The Team sigh disappointedly, as one.

"This is the only bit I'll concede slips into irredeemable silliness in these two stories," says Jac. "Tom needs a sharp slap!"

Have Jac and Richard changed ends? Richard's raving. "Using the CET to capture Tryst and Dymond is a really clever little twist. It's also rather gratifying that Tom plays his rejection of Tryst's excuses for his drug smuggling absolutely straight."

Jac agrees. "A nice resolution that uses what's already been established. And a superb Tom reaction. I'd been dreading a preachy 'Just say no' conclusion, but it's more mature than that."

"A brilliant moment," nods Peter. "It's remarkable how convincing he is here when just seconds earlier we had 'Ooh my everything!'" He considers the story. "Well, that was still fun, but I don't feel that the series is reaching its potential. It's too light and sunny and the monsters are shoddy."

Clay nods, a little reluctantly. "I love all these stories, but now and again you want something really scary or dramatic, just for variety."

Surely *The Horns of Nimon* will fit the bill? DWM

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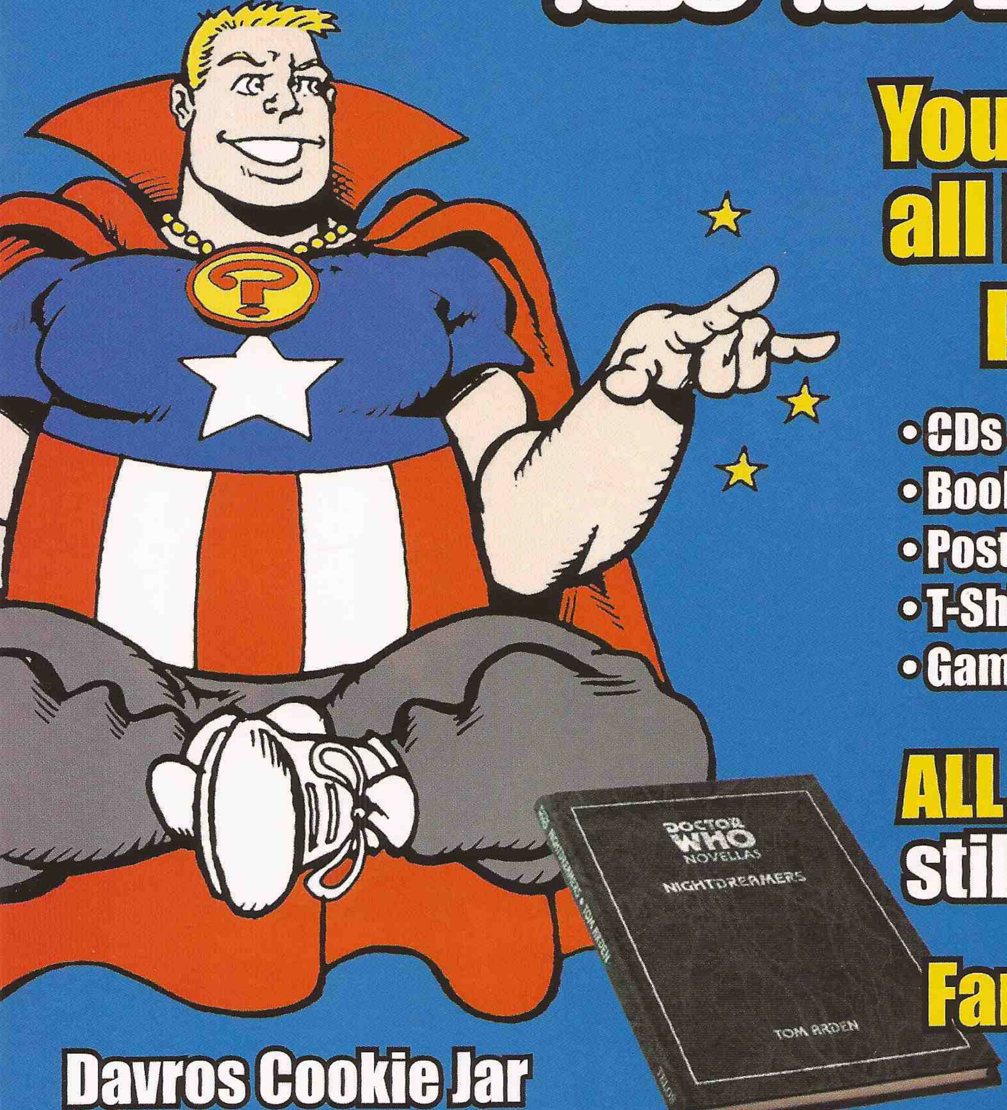
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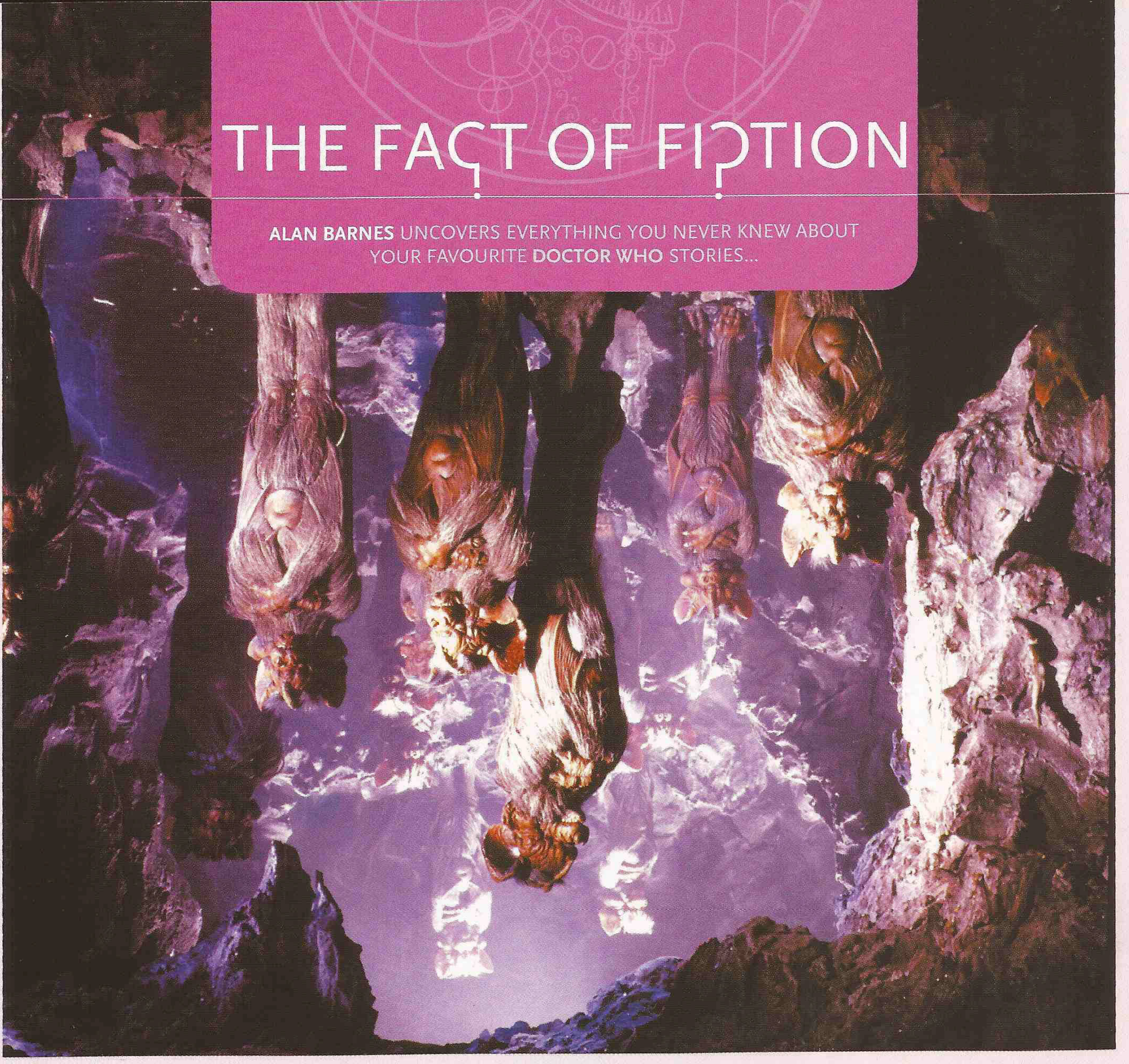
ALAN BARNES UNCOVERS EVERYTHING YOU NEVER KNEW ABOUT YOUR FAVOURITE **DOCTOR WHO** STORIES...



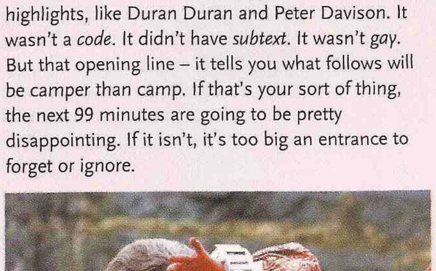
TIME AND THE RANI

"I've had enough of this drivel!"

ONE DAY, MAYBE SOONER THAN YOU THINK, *Time and the Rani* – the first Sylvester McCoy/ Seventh Doctor adventure, from the far-off days of 1987 – will be available to buy on DVD (or PSP, or HDVD, or Blu-Ray Phase Shift, whatever new medium's being foisted on boys with more money than sense that week). And us craggy footsoldiers of the old guard are afraid we might have to explain it to new *Doctor Who* fans. Account for it, even. In the last couple of weeks, I've mentioned to several of my friends that I've been making notes on *Time and the Rani* for a forthcoming *Fact of Fiction* – and each and every one has said: "You can't make the new fans watch that!" (or something slightly less polite).

Because *Time and the Rani*, it's fair to say, is not the best that *Doctor Who* has to offer. In any field you care to name – bar one. It's not the best post-regeneration story (still *Spearhead From Space*, although that *Christmas Invasion* gave it a run for its money); it's not the best story with a 'mistaken identity' subplot (I'll see your *Enemy of the World*, and raise you *The Androids of Tara*); and it's so far behind on the 'killer insects' front, *The Green Death* has lapped it. But if there's a *Doctor Who* story with a more arresting opening line than "Leave the girl, it's the man I want!" – well, I've not seen it.

It's all in one-time *Dynasty* star Kate O'Mara's pouty delivery, of course – and yes, it's as camp as a Bette Davis season at the Brighton Picture Palace. The trouble is, the rest of it *isn't*. It's not even *fey*. True camp is invisible to anyone who's not in the know, and *Time and the Rani* just ain't that subtle. The 1980s were like this – all eyeshadow and highlights, like Duran Duran and Peter Davison. It wasn't a *code*. It didn't have *subtext*. It wasn't *gay*. But that opening line – it tells you what follows will be camper than camp. If that's your sort of thing, the next 99 minutes are going to be pretty disappointing. If it isn't, it's too big an entrance to forget or ignore.



Time Lady and rogue scientist, the Rani is an interesting case – she's too good to be a villain. In all three of her *Doctor Whos* (some greybeards and longtooths might tell you the 1993 Children in Need mini-adventure *Dimensions in Time* doesn't count as *Doctor Who*. What, like last year's David 'n' Billie *Christmas Invasion* prologue doesn't? Fools!), the Rani dominates proceedings, steals the show. Remarkable as Kate O'Mara is, it'd be interesting to see someone else play the Rani, just to see if it's the character or the performance that's more overpowering. The thing is, she's so strong you'd be forgiven for wondering if you're watching not a *Doctor Who* adventure guest-starring the Rani, but a Rani adventure guest-starring Doctor Who. Watching *Time and the Rani* back-to-back with *The Christmas Invasion*, I found myself wondering if that's not the root of *Time and the Rani*'s problem. The newly-regenerated Seventh Doctor simply isn't as strong as his adversary, not even by the end; the Tenth Doctor, on the other hand, spends over half his début adventure unconscious in someone else's PJs, but still bestrides it like some Gallifreyan collossus.

Leave the special guest star, it's the man we want. But all the same – hands up who wouldn't just *die* to see the Rani in a *proper* solo show...? **AB**

PART ONE Broadcast: Monday 7 September 1987

In space, the TARDIS is forced off-course by a bombardment of brightly-coloured rays.

Hired to realise BBC graphics designer Oliver Elmes' storyboard for *Doctor Who*'s new title sequence, outside contractor CAL Video was also asked to generate these images of the TARDIS being battered by the Rani's blue and green spaceship-grounding beams – earning the distinction of providing the series with its first ever computer-generated TARDIS.

Its occupants are unconscious.

? Be warned, this bit's not for *Doctor Who* beginners! The exercise bike on the TARDIS floor is placed to suggest that *Time and the Rani* takes place in the Sixth Doctor's 'future' life – in other words, not following directly on from the events of the last episode transmitted beforehand, *The Trial of a Time Lord*'s closing Part Fourteen (1986); rather, *Time and the Rani* actually occurs some time after the 'evidence' sections seen in Parts Nine to Twelve of the *Trial* (by when, new companion Mel was attempting to turn the Doctor into a fitness freak, hence the bike). We have to assume, therefore, that following *Trial*'s final episode, the Doctor returned the Mel who'd been taken 'out of time' to appear in Parts Thirteen and Fourteen back to wherever/whenever it was she came from, only to meet her sort-of for the first time some considerable while later in his lifetime (a gap that continues to be thoroughly exploited in various novels and audios).

In fact, *Time and the Rani* writers Pip and Jane Baker make this clear in an epilogue to *Doctor Who: The Ultimate Foe* (WH Allen, 1988), their novelisation of *Trial* Parts Thirteen and Fourteen: here, the post-Trial Doctor reunites the 'out of time' Mel with his own future incarnation on a "verdant stellar fragment" named Oxyveguramosa, before continuing his adventures alone. His later 'first' encounter with Mel is related in Gary Russell's novel *Business Unusual* (BBC Books, 1997). The same author documents the Sixth Doctor's final adventure with Mel in *Spiral Scratch* (BBC Books, 2005)...

Its abrupt landing on a rocky alien world is observed by a leonine native.

Husband-and-wife scriptwriting team Pip and Jane Baker described their alien planet as green and densely wooded – and wrote their script with Park Wood in Ruislip, Middlesex in mind. Not far from the Bakers' home, Park Wood had featured in the mine-laying scenes, among others, in Part Two of their first *Doctor Who*, *The Mark of the Rani* (1985). Designer Geoff Powell led objections to this setting, the production team favouring a more 'alien' terrain. Three quarries featured in the finished programmes, all of them around Frome in Somerset and all of them owned by Amey Roadstone Works. The disused Cloford and Westdown pits shared the most part of the shoot, which spanned Saturday 4 to Wednesday 9 April 1987. Here, it's Cloford where the alien Ikona looks up, but Westdown where the TARDIS lands.

Outcast Time Lord scientist the Rani (Kate O'Mara) enters the ship, instructing her monstrous minion to disregard the face-down Doctor's companion – it's the man she wants.

! ? How does the Rani open the TARDIS door? Is the implication that all TARDISes have the same key?

◄ *The Tetraps snoozing in their eyrie – an impressive model shot, originally intended for the cover of* Radio Times.

KEY TO SYMBOLS

- TITLE
- SOURCES
- SCRIPT
- SHOOTING
- CAST & CREW
- CONNECTIONS
- EDITING
- MUSIC
- SPECIAL EFFECTS
- MONSTERS
- VILLAINS
- NOVELISATION
- ! OOPS!
- ? SPECULATION

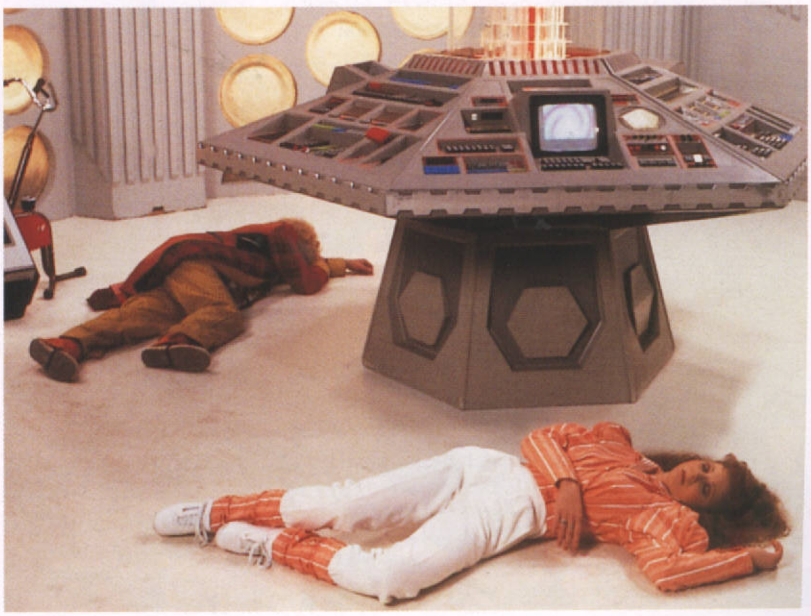
◄ *The Rani outside her TARDIS. Disguised as a glittery pyramid. For some reason...*

? The Rani was last seen in *The Mark of the Rani*, where she was left trapped in her TARDIS alongside the Master and a fast-growing tyrannosaurus rex. So how did she get out of that? Helpfully, husband-and-wife writers Pip and Jane Baker – the Rani's creators – let us in on the secret in their novelisation *Doctor Who: Time and the Rani* (WH Allen, 1987), in which they reveal: "the Time Spillage that accelerated the Tyrannosaurus from babyhood into virile youth also accelerated it into full size. Its spine snapped against the ceiling of the TARDIS."

However, an entirely different account of the Rani's escape is given in Christopher Bulis' *Missing Adventures* novel *State of Change* (Virgin Publishing Ltd, 1994), where the Sixth Doctor and Peri encounter the arch-villainess, now using the alias of Cleopatra Selene, in a strangely altered, electrically-powered Ancient Rome of 41 AD. The same Doctor-and-companion pairing also fell foul of the post-*Mark* Rani in the Bakers' own *Make Your Own Adventure With Doctor Who* book, *Race Against Time* (Severn House Publishers Ltd, 1986) – of which, more later. None of these, however, explain why the Rani has since taken to wearing a beauty spot.

The creature lumbers forward, turning the Doctor (Sylvester McCoy) over – only to see the Doctor's features blur as his body regenerates...

? Pip and Jane Baker confirm their intention regarding the cause of the Doctor's regeneration in their *Time and the Rani* novelisation, beginning with the Sixth Doctor and Mel's exercise regime being disrupted by the Rani's bolts – and stating, baldly, that: "Regeneration had been triggered by the tumultuous buffetting." There are at least two alternative explanations, however: the first, hinted at it in various of Virgin Publishing's *New* and *Missing Adventures* novels (such as Craig Hinton's *Millennial Rites*, 1995) more-or-less has it that the Sixth Doctor, having learned in the preceding *The Trial of a Time Lord* that he will one day spawn an evil shadow incarnation known as 'The Valeyard', subconsciously or otherwise sought to terminate his current 'life' early, thereby allowing his Seventh incarnation to become 'Time's Champion'. The other is that the Doctor and Mel were already incapacitated *before* the TARDIS came under fire – in other words, the Sixth Doctor was mortally wounded by who-knows-what at the ▶



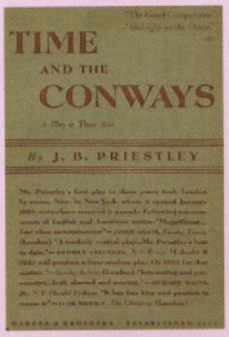
▼ *Trouble in't TARDIS – that's not Colin Baker!*

◀ conclusion of an as-yet-unseen adventure. This is the theory adopted by *Spiral Scratch*, as mentioned above: here, the Doctor is exposed to a fatal dose of chronon energy before the Rani's tractor beam brings the TARDIS down to Lakertya – the novel concluding, in fact, with the Rani's words "Leave the girl, it's the man I want!"

The first of several horrendous hairpieces to feature in *Time and the Rani* is a blond, curly number worn by Sylvester McCoy in an attempt to double for his predecessor, Colin Baker – whose contract had not been renewed by diktat of the BBC's Director of Programmes, Michael Grade. Late in October 1986, producer John Nathan-Turner had been instructed to tell Baker that his three years as the Doctor were enough, and a new leading man was needed to pep up the programme. By December, Nathan Turner had laid the groundwork for Baker to feature in one final four-part adventure to be made in the spring of 1987, hiring Pip and Jane Baker to write scripts for the Sixth Doctor's terminal encounter with the Rani. But Baker refused the opportunity, claiming he needed to secure other work – meaning that the storyline being drafted would now need to be rethought as a début, not an adieu. Although favoured by Nathan-Turner after the producer had been to see him performing as the Pied Piper at the National Theatre, McCoy was one of several actors interviewed and/or auditioned – unsuccessful applicants including McCoy's former mentor, fringe actor/impresario Ken Campbell. The visually-effected regeneration scene, therefore, marked one of four occasions to date where incoming and outgoing Doctors did not hand over the role on the studio floor (the other handovers being Troughton to Pertwee, McGann to Eccleston [which doesn't really count anyway], and Eccleston to Tennant).

▲ *With a rubbish wig, you too can resemble your predecessor. On a very dark night indeed.*

▶ *One of the Rani's bubble traps explodes.*



TIME
AND THE
CONWAYS

By J. B. PRIESTLEY

▲ *The cover for J B Priestley's Time and the Conways, which gave the Seventh Doctor's début its title.*

▼ *The Tetraps emerge from the laboratory. The impressive entrance was built on location, with the upper stories added in post-production..*

Commissioned and recorded under the title *Strange Matter*, Nathan-Turner's insistence that the story's title contain the name of its antagonist led to *Time and the Rani* – after *Time and the Conways*, a JB Priestley play of 1937, whose enclosed, dream-like unfolding could not be further removed from Pip and Jane's story or style.

Later, at the Rani's citadel-cum-laboratory...

...originally intended to be a Gothic castle of sorts, both inside and out. The upper levels of the complex, with its rocket launching pad, were a model – shots of which were merged with the 'actual' entrance in post-production.

...her servants Beyus (Donald Pickering) and Sarn (Karen Clegg) – both native to this planet, Lakertya – carry an unconscious human (Tom O'Leary) into a gallery of narrow cubicles. His name? Einstein!

New series script editor Andrew Cartmel, who'd been hired in January 1987, had wanted to dramatise the scene where physicist Albert Einstein is kidnapped by the Rani. In this abandoned sequence, Einstein was to have been whisked away partway through putting his name to a fateful memorandum concerning the atomic bomb – presumably that written to US President Franklin D Roosevelt on 2 August 1939, penned at Einstein's home on Long Island: "It is conceivable... that extremely powerful bombs of a new type may thus be constructed." (Since a housekeeper was also due to appear in the cast as late as 16 February 1987, it's unlikely that the scene would have taken place at the Los Alamos National Laboratory, as has often been reported.)

This was Cartmel's suggested replacement for the Bakers' original idea: that the Rani should shanghai the old Testament character of Israel's King Solomon, who was to find himself inside the Rani's TARDIS after retiring to ponder the problem of two "harlots" who'd been presented to him, each of whom claimed that the same squalling infant was theirs. The final 'Judgement of Solomon' – recounted in I Kings 3 (16-28) – would then have been delivered at the story's end, where the

returned-to-Earth Solomon was to have threatened to bisect the controversial child with his sword. Cue end music: "We cut out on that," the Bakers explained, "because we assume everyone knows the Judgement of Solomon." Producer John Nathan-Turner didn't, however, and feared exiting a *Doctor Who* story with a threatened baby-cleaving unresolved. (For those **DWM** readers who skipped Sunday School likewise – the baby didn't die, the threat of giving half to one whore and half to the other was enough for the true mother to beg Solomon to give the whole baby to the false other, and thereby the facts were revealed.)

The alien Lakertyans' name derived from the adjective 'lacertian', meaning 'of lizards: lizard-like' – hence the make-up scales glued to the faces of Beyus, Sarn *et al*, whom the writers had intended would be coloured in faint shades of azures and cobalt blues.

The Rani enters the diamond-shaped central area of her lab, where the new Doctor is laid out on a table. She is about to enter a sealed chamber on an upper level when the Doctor wakes suddenly, recognising her in an instant.

"Since you were exiled from Gallifrey, you've had nothing but contempt for all other Time Lords," sneers the Doctor as he faces the Rani. Early on in the scripting process, the Bakers incorporated a 'nightmare' for the newly regenerated Doctor, which would have recapped *The Mark of the Rani* and flashed back to the Rani being exiled from Gallifrey (the provisional cast list of February 1987 had a part for 'Lord President').

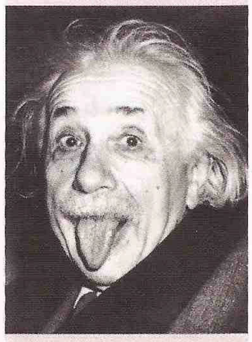
A screen laid into the table tells the Doctor that an asteroid composed of 'Strange Matter' orbits the planet.

The theoretical existence of an ultra-dense 'Strange Matter' formed by gravity processes inside especially massive neutron stars (which then become 'strange' or 'quark stars') was first put forward by Princeton physicist Edward Witten in his paper *Cosmic Separation of Phases* (1984). If Strange Matter could be stabilised outside of the immense gravitational pressures it was forged in, it's been suggested that the 'strangelets' formed might consume or swallow up ordinary matter.

As an aside, Strange Matter has nothing inherently to do with gravity; it is made up of a type of quark associated with high energy interactions (although some sort of stellar collapse might cause it to form). Needless to say, Strange Matter is not the really heavy lump of rock orbiting Lakertya here.

▲ Mel falls prey to a Tetrap's paralysing tongue. And it looks like he's nibbling on her wrist now too...

▼ The real Albert Einstein – originally to have played a greater role in Time and the Rani.



◄ Ikona (Mark Greenstreet) and Mel (Bonnie Langford).

▲ Poor doomed Sarn (Karen Clegg). "I don't want to harm him!"

Stumbling as he's chased around the lab, the Doctor is helped to his feet by Sarn – who runs off when the Rani threatens her with punishment.

Actors playing the Lakertyans were persuaded to adopt a bizarre 'alien' running style, pegging it with their arms pointed backwards, their elbows unbent and their palms upturned.

The manic Doctor's threat to smash the Rani's equipment is thwarted when she summons her monstrous minion Urak (Richard Gauntlett) – who ensnares the Doctor in an electronic net, rendering him unconscious once more.

The Lakertyan who witnessed the TARDIS' arrival, Ikona (Mark Greenstreet), enters the TARDIS, sees the still-stunned Mel, and hoists her over his shoulder.

Ikona's name is seemingly derived from the word iconoclast – a person that faces against the tide of his peers' opinions. Ikona's derogatory attitude to the hedonistic culture of his fellow Lakertyans is vaguely reminiscent of Cully in *The Dominators* (1968), another story that warned against appeasement and collaboration with an enemy.

Outside, she recovers and wriggles free of his hold, only to run into the fleeing Sarn. Startled, Sarn turns – and trips a hidden wire, activating a bizarre trap. A bubble forms around Sarn, which launches her high into the air – only to explode as it strikes the crest of a rocky wall above.

Why is the Rani's 'bubble-trap' tripped by a wire? What we know of these devices suggests they're far more like landmines, being demi-spheres buried in the ground – the sphere only being completed when some idiot steps into the dead centre of the trap (indeed, in Part Three, Beyus says that "the grounds outside are a minefield"). In which case, they'd surely ensnare far more of the unwary if they were ▶

▲ The Doctor sulks about his new 'moody' personality.

◄ activated by pressure across a wider area of the demisphere, not tripped by a narrow wire – a method that defies all logical sense.

Standing over Sarn's smouldering skeleton, Ikona accuses Mel of being in league with the occupiers of his planet.

! It's not clear how victims of the Rani's bubble-traps could be stripped of their skin in an instant. It *looks* like Sarn is blown up when the trap explodes – in which case, her remains should be nothing like as neat. But then again, seeing as the anklets used later on, in Part Four, *also* magically reduce the Rani's victims to a skeletal state, perhaps both involve some sort of unknown high technology. Still, shouldn't Sarn's bones have shattered and scattered far more, seeing as they've just fallen from the top of a cliff?

Having drugged the Doctor to induce amnesia, the Rani puts on a ginger wig and, when he wakes, succeeds in passing herself off as Mel. As the Doctor studies a navigational guidance system distorter (unaware it was used to drag the TARDIS off-course), she claims that this is *his* lab: an explosion forced his regeneration – and, despite his amnesia, only he can properly repair the damaged equipment.

▲ *The new Doctor finds he has retained his "impeccable good taste."*

▼ *He's a dedicated follower of fashion! The Doctor revisits some of his old fashion statements in the TARDIS wardrobe.*

Mangled phraseology such as "bull in a barber's shop" was Nathan-Turner's idea of a quirk to differentiate the new Doctor from his philologic former incarnation. This wearying gimmick would be phased out one or two stories down the line.

It's rather ironic that, on waking from his regeneration in an unusually coherent and fit state, the Doctor is then drugged to induce the amnesia and confusion that usually go hand-in-hand with his changes of physionomy – see *Spearhead from Space* (1970), *Castrovalva* (1982) and the TV Movie (1996) amongst others.

Ikona means to exchange Mel for the Lakertyans' captive leader, Beyus...

! Unwanted noise on the location footage led to Bonnie Langford and Mark Greenstreet very obviously dubbing over their own voices here.

...but when Mel pulls Ikona away from another bubble-trap, she proves herself his ally. But they are being watched by one of the Rani's monstrous Tetrap servants.

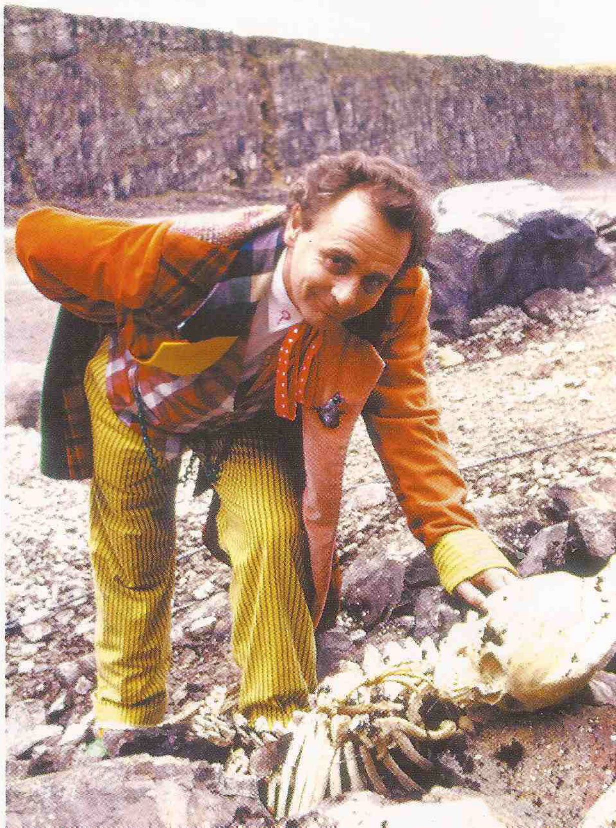
The Doctor, meanwhile, has worked out that the damaged equipment is intended to catalyse a sludge-like goo.

The Doctor's impromptu playing of a pair of spoon-like lab implements was inspired by Sylvester McCoy's virtuoso display of spoon-rattling one night at the location hotel.

Pursued, Mel and Ikona take cover inside a drainpipe.

As scripted for a woodland setting, here we would have seen Ikona exploiting the fact that although the Tetraps' vision gives them a 360° panoramic view of their surroundings, they can't look up nor down – and therefore hides in a shallow gully, concealing both Mel and himself beneath a canvas cover.

Bemused by the lab's purpose and unable to access its sealed upper level, the Doctor stops work in a funk.



WHERE ELSE HAVE I SEEN...?

The guest cast's appearances in cult television and film: a highly select guide

KATE O'MARA (1939-)
The Rani
Other Doctor Who appearances *The Mark of the Rani* (1985)/*Dimensions in Time* (1993) as The Rani; also *The Rani Reaps the Whirlwind* (BBV audio drama, 2000) as The Rani.
Film appearances include *The Vampire Lovers* (1970) as Governess; *The Horror of Frankenstein* (1970) as Alys.
TV appearances include *Danger Man: A Room in the Basement* (1965) as Annette; *Adam Adamant Lives!: The Basardi Affair* (1967) as Sonia Fawzi; *The Champions: To Trap a Rat* (1968) as Jane Purcell; *The Avengers: Stay Tuned* (1969) as Lisa; *Department S: Who Plays the Dummy?* (1969) as Pietra; *Jason King: A Kiss For a Beautiful Killer* (1972) as Delphi; *Dynasty* (various episodes, 1986) as Cassandra 'Caress' Morrell; *Howard's Way* (various episodes, 1989-90) as Laura Wilde; *Absolutely Fabulous: Happy New Year* (1995)/*Cold Turkey* (2003) as Jackie Stone; *Bad Girls* (various episodes, 2001) as Virginia O'Kane.

DONALD PICKERING (1933-)
Beyus
Other Doctor Who appearances *The Keys of Marinus* (1964) as Eyesen; *The Faceless Ones* (1967) as Blade.
TV appearances include *R3: One Free Man* (1965) as Watkins; *Out of the Unknown: Second Childhood* (1966) as Kenneth Dennistoun; *The Avengers: The Winged Avenger* (1967) as Peter Roberts/*Homicide and Old Lace* (1969) as Freddie Cartwright; *The Champions: The Fanatics* (1968) as Colonel Banks; *Dick Turpin: The Fox* (1980) as Lord Manderfell; *Sherlock Holmes and Doctor Watson* (1980) as Dr Watson; *Tales of the Unexpected: Skin* (1980) as Gallery Owner; *The Professionals: Lawson's Last Stand* (1982) as Brigadier Tennant; *Yes, Prime Minister: A Victory for Democracy*/*The Bishop's Gambit* (1986) as Sir Richard Wharton.

WANDA VENTHAM (1939-)
Faroon
Other Doctor Who appearances *The Faceless Ones* (1967) as Jean Rock; *Image of the Fendahl* (1977) as Thea Ransome.
Film appearances include *Carry On Cleo* (1964) as Pretty Bidder; *The Blood Beast Terror* (1968) as Clare Mallinger; *Carry On Up the Khyber* (1968) as Khasi's Wife; *Captain Kronos Vampire Hunter* (1974) as Lady Durward.
TV appearances include *The Rag Trade* (various episodes, 1962-3) as Shirley; *Danger Man: A Man to Be Trusted* (1964) as Stella Dorset; *The Avengers: The Gravediggers* (1965) as Nurse Spray; *Out of the Unknown: The Eye* (1966) as Josephine; *The Prisoner: It's Your Funeral* (1967) as Computer Attendant; *Department S: The Man from 'X'* (1969) as Leila; *UFO* (various episodes, 1970-1) as Dr/Col Virginia Lake; *The Sweeney: Abduction* (1975) as Brenda; *Minder: Dreamhouse* (1982) as Beryl Murdoch; *The Gentle Touch: Exit Laughing* (1984) as Selina De Sade; *Only Fools and Horses* (various episodes, 1989-92) as Pamela Parry; *Randall & Hopkirk (Deceased): Mental Apparition Disorder* (2000) as Alice Fullcup.

Next door, Beyus releases blood into a trough leading down into the bat-like Tetraps' eyrie. The Doctor's mood brightens when 'Mel' suggests they collect the radiation wave-meter he requires from his TARDIS – and surreptitiously communicates with Urak, telling him to "remove the girl from the TARDIS".

! Er... but the Rani was watching remotely when Sarn swerved away from Mel and jumped into a bubble-trap. So surely she *already* knows that the girl has left the TARDIS?

On the way, they pass Sarn's skeleton, where 'Mel' tells the Doctor he judged the Lakertyans indolent.

! ? Lakertya's "benevolent climate has induced lethargy" in its natives, according to the Rani – but there's not much evidence of natural benevolence on its barren, rock-strewn surface! Is this line a hangover from the first draft script, set on a forested planet?

Inside the TARDIS, the Doctor tries out a number of outfits to replace the now ill-fitting clothes of his former incarnation.

! "A little portentious perhaps, Mel?" asks the Doctor, trying on a schoolmaster's cap and gown. "Pretentious is the word," mutters the Rani. No, it's not – Sylvester McCoy has fluffed the word 'portentous', with no 'i'.

In a fan-pleasing piece of continuity, the Seventh Doctor also tries on versions of the costumes worn by Jon Pertwee, Tom Baker and Peter Davison's Doctors, plus a large fur coat occasionally donned by Patrick Troughton. The void-like wardrobe room seen here differs considerably from the one glimpsed in Colin Baker's début *The Twin Dilemma* (1984). Perhaps there's more than one?

Studying his supposed companion's features, the Doctor's memory begins to return, and a name forms on his lips – but the Rani slaps him out of it. Meanwhile, Mel has broken cover. While the Doctor is fetching the radiation wave-meter, the Rani activates the TARDIS scanner, which shows Urak's four-eyed view of Mel.

▲ *The all-seeing Tetraps. Don't try to sneak up on them... unless you're planning on attack by parachute.*

◄ *The Doctor discovers poor Sarn's skeletal remains.*

! How can the TARDIS scanner conveniently "focus in" on Urak's POV? Pip and Jane provide a fig-leaf of cover for this plot hole in their novelisation: "[the Rani] hurriedly took a reading from the bracelet and tapped the co-ordinates into the console."

The Doctor returns, the name 'Rani' having finally come to him – and now 'Mel' claims that the girl they see on the scanner is the evil genius herself. They watch as the real Mel blunders into a bubble-trap – and is propelled, screaming, into the air...

THE FACT OF FICTION

PART TWO Broadcast: Monday 14 September 1987

◀ The bubble-trap splashes down into a rock pool...

Filmed at ARC's working Whatley Quarry on 5 April 1987, this scene called for a powerboat to be run across the huge lake formed in one area of the pit, to create the turning spume eventually seen beneath the video-effected bubble-trap.

At the edge of the pool, Ikona attempts to remove the explosive mechanism from the trap's underside. Back at the Rani's HQ, the Doctor presumes 'the Rani' was killed in the trap – but is puzzled as to why the villainess was dressed like 'Mel'. Ikona successfully releases Mel – but again, they're watched over by Urak.

However long it takes for the Doctor and the Rani to leave the TARDIS, walk back to the citadel and recommence their experimentation – it takes Ikona far longer to defuse the bubble-trap, and it takes Urak even longer still to track down Mel and Ikona. Which, bearing in mind he had Mel directly in his sights when she fell into the trap, is quite some achievement, even for a very slow Tetrap.

A short Beyus/Rani dialogue appended to the "More hasta, less vista" scene was removed from the overrunning Part Two. The Rani having now passed through the locked gallery door, this concluded when she labelled the vacant cubicle 'The Doctor'.

Ikona takes Mel to his secret cache of weapons taken from the Tetraps, where he fends off the lumbering Urak.

The orchestra stabs which characterise *Doctor Who* newcomer Keff McCulloch's *Time and the Rani* score (the bits that go 'SHONG! SHUNG!' when Urak jumps out at Mel, for example) were ubiquitous – epidemic, even – in British pop music of the time: indeed, virtually identical sounds punctuate *Beethoven (I Love To Listen To)*, the Eurythmics flop of autumn 1987, and were slapped all over the Pet Shop Boys version of *Always On My Mind*, that year's Christmas number one. Usually generated as presets for sampling keyboards such as the Emu Emulator series machine that McCulloch hired for *Time and the Rani*, orchestra stabs had featured heavily in the oeuvre of producer-of-the-moment Trevor Horn – one of the earliest examples being on the hugely influential *Owner of a Lonely Heart*, a 1983 hit for rock dinosaurs Yes.

FURTHER INFO

• VIDEO

Time and the Rani

COMPANY BBC VIDEO
YEAR 1995
CAT NO BBCV 5005
AVAILABILITY DELETED

• NOVELISATION

Time and the Rani

COMPANY TARGET BOOKS
YEAR 1988 (reprinted 1991)
AUTHOR PIP AND JANE BAKER
AVAILABILITY OUT OF PRINT

BBC
TIME AND THE RANI
DOCTOR WHO
PG
Starring SYLVESTER McCOY
Doctor Who
TIME AND THE RANI
PIP AND JANE BAKER
Doctor Who
TIME AND THE RANI
PIP AND JANE BAKER

▼ *Seeing double? Kate O'Mara and Bonnie Langford give new Doctor Sylvester McCoy a sight for sore eyes...*

If the four eyes of a Tetrap – whose name derives from the prefix 'tetra-', meaning 'four of' (for example, 'tetrapterous': 'four-winged') – give it 360° vision, how come Urak needs to turn his head from side to side here (and on a number of other occasions)? Admittedly, the animatronic Tetrap head seen in close-up during this sequence, complete with extendable forked tongue, isn't as subtle as an actor, but nevertheless...

The Doctor has by now located the cause of the explosion in the lab – a heat-conducting sheet of plastic had burned out.

Here, we learn that Mel has been unable to put down the once widely-read, now largely forgotten novels of CP Snow (Charles Percy Snow, 1905-80), whose eleven-book *Strangers and Brothers* sequence of 1940-70 examines the means by which various British establishments exercise their authority (indeed, Snow gave the language a now-common expression in the title of 1964's entry, *The Corridors of Power*). Snow is mainly noted, however, for his musings on the gulf between devotees of the arts and humanities, and those given to the sciences. In *The Two Cultures and the Scientific Revolution* (1959), he observed that arts ponces would mock the shortcomings of a scientist who'd never read Shakespeare, but wouldn't expect themselves to be acquainted with something equally fundamental to scientific understanding, such as the Second Law of Thermodynamics ('entropy tends not to decrease' – which isn't exactly as all *Doctor Who* fans heard it in 1981's *Logopolis*; but that is, indeed, another story). For this reason, any literary type who invokes Snow had better make sure their scientific pronouncements are completely unassailable, else they risk falling flat on their faces. If you stated, for example, that it was even *remotely* possible, under *any* circumstances – including the use of the wrong sort of plastic as a heat conductor – to break the Second Law of Thermodynamics, then you'd make yourself look just a little bit... Oh.

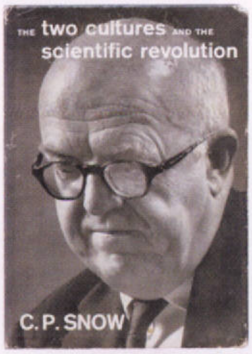
Overlooking the Rani's HQ, Mel wonders what purpose the ramp on its roof might serve. Inside, the Rani volunteers to fetch a petroleum-based alternative plastic from the supposedly backward Lakertyans – and locks the Doctor in.

Early on, Sylvester McCoy had declared real-life TV scientists Dr Magnus Pyke and David Bellamy as touchstones for his portrayal of the Doctor. The Doctor's enthusiasm for a non-petroleum-based, biodegradable plastic here may have represented a lunge in the direction of environmentalist Bellamy's field, a couple of years ahead of a popular renaissance in green politics in the UK – but it wouldn't be followed up in subsequent adventures.

Mel and Ikona encounter Beyus' wife, Faroon (Wanda Ventham), on her way to the Rani's HQ. Faroon defends Beyus' reluctant collaboration with the Rani – but when Mel reveals Sarn's skeleton, she learns too late that the remains are those of the older woman's daughter. Determined to release the Doctor, Mel persuades Ikona to act as a decoy, enabling her to slip past the Tetraps guarding the entrance to the citadel.

Mel enters the Rani's lab, where she fails to recognise the changed Doctor – and he in turn attempts to arrest the woman he presumes to be the villain of the piece.

An altogether more ambitious tussle was planned out by the Bakers, with Mel turning an oxy-acetylene torch on the Doctor, and the Doctor defending himself with an upturned stool – then leaping onto a workbench with a "Kung fu yell" to cut off the torch's gas supply with his foot. But as seen on screen, the Rani's lab isn't that much of a lab at all! This sequence reverted to its scripted form in the Bakers' novelisation.



▲ *Novelist CP Snow.*

► *Ikona and the Doctor plot their next move.*

▲ *"Yesh, Mishtresh!" It's the fearsome Urak!*

▼ *The Rani claims another victim.*

Outside, the confused Urak mistakes the Rani for Mel, and ensnares his own mistress with the net-gun. The Doctor and Mel check each other's pulses, confirming one another's true identities. While the Rani goes to manufacture a suitable sheet of plastic in her TARDIS, the Doctor and Mel wonder why the Rani should be targeting the super-dense asteroid, the destruction of which would be catastrophic for Lakertya and beyond. Mel hears a "giant heartbeat" beyond the door to the upper level...

Quite how a disembodied brain might make a sound remotely like a heartbeat is anyone's guess. Then again, a 'mysterious giant heartbeat' is a well-worn *Doctor Who* device, familiar from *The Macra Terror* (1967), *Fury From the Deep* (1968), *The Pescatons* LP (1976), *State of Decay* (1980) – not to mention pretty much every Dalek story!

Using the keycode 953 – both the Doctor's age, and the Rani's – Beyus allows the Doctor to access the gallery, where Einstein and ten other intellectual giants from across all of time and space have been stored.

The Doctor last gave his age as 900 in *Revelation of the Daleks* (1985). Perhaps the difference can be attributed to the time spent travelling on his own before meeting Mel. For the second time. Or something.

This scene reunites Donald Pickering and Wanda Ventham, who'd appeared together in *The Faceless Ones* (1967). They also played a husband-and-wife pairing in the second series of Thames TV sitcom *Executive Stress* which, by a quirk of scheduling, aired on Monday nights at 8.00pm from 21 September 1987 – immediately following Parts Three and Four of *Time and the Rani.*

The Bakers' novelisation here names three more of the genii in the arcade: Charles Darwin, the father of evolutionary theory; Louis Pasteur, the father of microbiology (whose name was given in final cast lists: he was played by extra Cenydd Joeenz); and 'Za Panato', whoever he might be. Mel names the woman Hypatia on screen: this can only be Hypatia of Alexandria (circa 380-415), a philosopher, mathematician and Pagan whose accomplishments are supposed to include the invention of the astrolabe.

Mel points out a 12th, vacant cubicle labelled ►

◄ 'The Doctor' – whose Time Lord insights separate him from the other 11.

The Rani is on her way back. Faroon escorts Mel to safety while the Doctor attempts to feign his continued ignorance of the Rani's true identity. But he fails to convince, and once the heat shield has been replaced, she starts up her now fully-functioning lab machinery and removes the ginger wig: "You know, don't you?" The Doctor makes a dash for it – but ends up trapped in the hungry Tetraps' eyrie.

PART THREE Broadcast: Monday 21 September 1987

Beyus distracts the Tetraps by releasing blood into their trough. From hiding, Mel and Faroon watch as the Rani surveys the scene outside – then Mel sends Faroon back, to avoid revealing her complicity in Mel's escape. Back in the gallery of geniuses, the Doctor evades Urak by hiding inside his own cubicle. Beyus tells the Doctor that the reason for the Lakertyans' apparent passivity may be found in their Centre of Leisure – but when the Doctor sabotages the Rani's machinery by removing a microthermistor, Beyus steps in to stop him.

When the Rani returns to find Beyus floored and the Doctor gone, she activates an alarm and sends the Tetraps out in force. Mel is captured by Urak, turning blank-faced and rigid when the monster tongues her behind the ear...

The Bakers' novelisation has it so that Urak's "forked tongue darted, piercing... [Mel's] ashen cheek", then later confirms she's been paralysed "by the venom from Urak's spitting tongue". Their text duplicates the stage directions given in their script – but it's not exactly how it looks on screen!

Outside, the Doctor is saved from walking into a bubble-trap when he encounters Ikona...

Amused by tales of Colin Baker's arachnophobia, Pip and Jane Baker inserted two sequences involving giant spiders into what they'd thought would be the actor's farewell performance: round about here, where the Doctor is saved by Ikona from being cocooned; and also where the Rani was to summon up a "huge ghostly spider" to take the Doctor captive. At least one of these sequences survived the transition from Baker to McCoy, the likelihood (or otherwise) of a giant fluorescent tarantula spinning a web being discussed quite late into pre-production.

► *Urak (Richard Gauntlett) on the prowl...*

▲ *The Seventh Doctor finds a novel use for his predecessor's umbrella...*

▼ *"Tonight, Matthew, I'm going to be... Mick Hucknall!"*

▼ *Squeeze up a bit! The Doctor returns the 11 genii to their own times.*

...who uses a sparking weapon to hold the Tetrap on the Doctor's tail back, the monster falling foul of the trap instead. With Mel her captive, the Rani orders Faroon to take a message to the Doctor...

Arriving at the Centre of Leisure, the Doctor learns that Beyus has made the rebellious Ikona a pariah among his fellow Lakertyans – including his brother, Lanisha (John Segal). From her lab, the Rani elects to punish Ikona's subversion by releasing killer insects from a spherical device hung from the ceiling. Three Lakertyans are struck dead, Lanisha among them.

The 'insects' here being represented by a rather disappointing and blocky video effect.

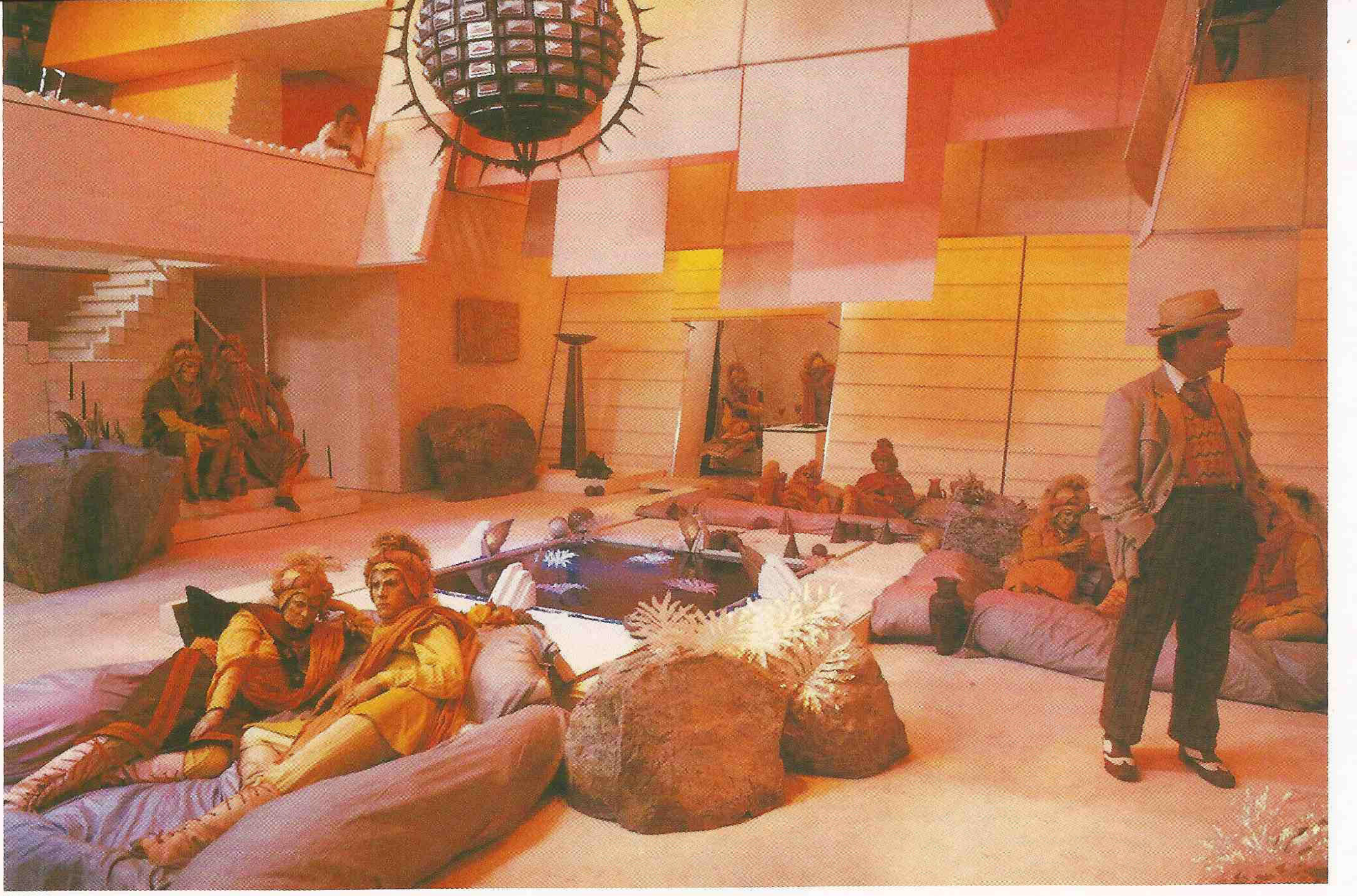
Faroon arrives, telling the Doctor that the Rani will exchange the stolen microthermistor for the captive Mel, who's now hanging limp in the Tetraps' eyrie. The exchange is made in the open, but too late the Doctor discovers that Urak has swapped the microthermistor for a convincing hologrammatic copy of Mel. The real Mel, meanwhile, is revived and forced to assist Beyus' efforts to stimulate the genii's mental activity ahead of the asteroidal solstice vital to the Rani's plan.

A rocket now sits on the ramp above the Rani's citadel, its fixed trajectory leading the Doctor to conclude that the Rani's scheme is dependent on detonating the asteroid at a precise moment...

Unless the Rani has commandeered a pre-existing launch complex for her HQ, it's frankly mental that her plot hangs on co-ordinating such a complicated sequence of events. And if the construction of a more sophisticated rocket is really not within her own abilities, she'd surely be able to apply the mind of a kidnapped genius to the problem...

Ikona repeats his decoy tactic to allow the Doctor to slip into the citadel – but Urak isn't fooled twice, and tongues the Doctor stiff. Mel watches as the Doctor is placed in his waiting cubicle – then, unseen, follows the Rani into the sealed upper level, where the villainess has installed a giant brain to collect the thoughts of the kidnapped genii.

The Rani's big brain was producer John Nathan-Turner's idea, dating back to the first round of rewrites. Andrew Cartmel recalls in his book *Script Doctor* (Reynolds & Hearn, 2005): "he'd said something like, 'What we need in this story is a giant



brain. They're getting all these geniuses and sucking their intelligence into a giant brain.' And there it was."

The Rani drags Mel back down to the gallery, where she instructs Beyus to connect the Doctor's mind to her superbrain: "Switch on!"

PART FOUR Broadcast: Monday 28 September 1987

Urak proposes the slaughter of the remaining Lakertyans – but the Rani, mindful not to waste a potential future resource, instead sends Urak and a number of Tetraps to the Centre of Leisure. There, anklet-like devices are fitted to the Lakertyans – their function revealed when Urak activates one of the anklets remotely, reducing its wearer to a skeleton.

The many voices of the Rani's superbrain (Peter Tuddenham, Jacki Webb) have since been joined by another – the Doctor's, conversing in Malapropisms and other sorts of nonsense. Fearing that he'll provoke seizures in her superbrain, the Rani rushes to disconnect the Doctor – whereupon the Doctor, aided by Mel, manages to shut the Rani inside his cubicle.

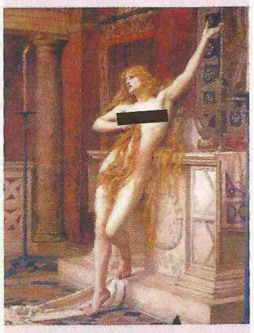
The Bakers' novelisation adds in an odd little sequence in which a Tetrap treads on a phial of liquid which the Rani had intended to use on the Doctor and Mel – and being smothered to death by the sudden growth of a luminous green fungus, "infiltrating mouth and nostrils to block the trachea and lungs."

In the brain chamber, the Doctor concludes that the Rani's machines are working to formulate a synthetic alloy with which to destroy the Strange Matter and thereby provoke a supernova...

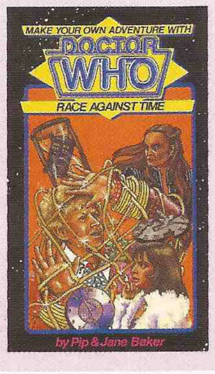
Freed by Beyus, the Rani fills in the blanks: the supernova will cause helium II to form in Lakertya's atmosphere, creating a 'chronon shell' around the planet as her irradiated superbrain expands, becoming one vast 'Time Manipulator' with which she will be able to rewrite the evolutionary order – allowing the dinosaurs of Earth to reach their full potential, for example.

This isn't the first time the Rani has sought much the same evil end – and YOU know it! In the (Pip and Jane-authored) *Make Your Own Adventure With Doctor Who* book *Race Against Time*, YOU encountered the Sixth Doctor and Peri – remember? You'd hardly forget! – and were whisked away from your home to a far-off alien world taken over by the Rani, who was plotting to project the planet Earth 'back to the Cretaceous Age' by perfecting a 'Time Destabilizer' forged from helium II ('Which means she's been back to the Leptonic Era,' the Sixth Doctor 'chuntered' to YOU at one point). But what was the name of that alien domain colonised by the Rani? Was it: [1] the planet Hipuskyra; [2] the planet Pyro Shika; or [3] the Moon of Kerophysi? If you said [1] or [3], you are clearly an alien imposter – and you fall into a big hole in the ground, there to be eaten by hungry Ratapes. THE END. If you said [2] – congratulations! Now continue to the next paragraph of this exciting and informative *Fact of Fiction* feature.

▲ *Top: The Centre of Leisure. Above: The real Louis Pasteur.*



▲ *Another of the kidnapperd genii – Hypatia of Alexandra.*



The science here is more than a little hazy. "The only known detonator for exploding a Strange Matter asteroid is Strange Matter itself." There's no reason why Strange Matter should be needed to explode Strange Matter (so, therefore, no need to search for the synthetic alloy). In fact, there's no reason to suspect that it should explode at all! More importantly there's no reason why, if it were exploded, that Strange Matter should produce a supernova.

For what it's worth, helium II is real; it's the name for helium's superfluid state, which it reaches at very low temperatures. But as it's in the context of supernovae, ▶

◀ it's likely that Pip and Jane meant helium-2, *ie* two protons and no neutrons, which would not be stable. **DWM** checked on the evaluated and experimental unevaluated nuclear structure databases (no, honestly, we did – no stone left unturned for a *Fact of Fiction*!), but there's absolutely nothing on helium-2, which basically means that it cannot be made.

The Leptonic era (or epoch) refers to the period of 10-3 seconds to 1 second after the Big Bang, during which elements including helium began to form. Finally, in theoretical physics, a chronon is the smallest possible quantum of time. But it could no more form a shell than you or I...

Urak is eavesdropping as the Rani confirms she'll sit out the lethal supernova in her TARDIS. Without thinking, the Doctor corrects one of the brain's calculations – enabling it to complete its formula for a synthetic mass to destroy the Strange Matter, named 'loyhargil'.

...being an anagram of 'Holy Grail'. And of 'hail glory', too. Then there's 'girly halo', 'golly hair', 'hoary gill', 'ahoy grill', 'oh, Gary ill' and many, many more. Don't write in.

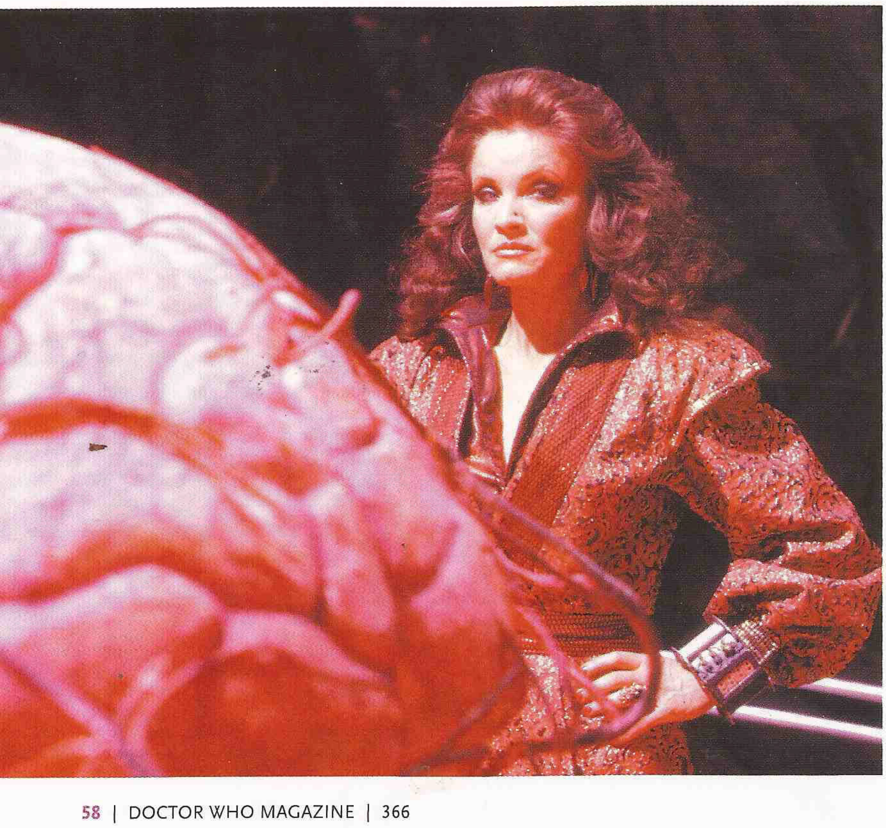
Evading Urak, the Doctor and Mel make for the Centre of Leisure, where the Doctor devises a means to bypass the circuits controlling the anklets, freeing Faroon and the other Lakertyans. As the gooey loyhargil is loaded into the Rani's rocket, the Rani orders Urak to remain behind while she monitors the experiment from her TARDIS...

Back at the Rani's HQ, Mel and Ikona release the genii and take them back to the TARDIS, while Beyus helps Faroon and the Doctor to clip the explosive anklets all around the superbrain. The Doctor then halts the countdown to the rocket's launch, seizing a flask from the Rani's console table as he and the others leave; Beyus alone remains inside the brain chamber, to guard against interference. Outside, the Doctor confronts the Rani, saying that the Lakertyans have risen up against her. He goads her into activating the anklets and destroying her superbrain... killing Beyus in the process.

▲ *Mel helps Albert Einstein (Tom O'Leary) escape from his cubicle.*

▲ *Poor newly-widowed Faroon (Wanda Ventham) and Ikona.*

▼ *The Rani tends to her pet brain. As you do.*



Had Colin Baker elected to make *Time and the Rani* his swansong, the Sixth Doctor would have met Beyus' end – or something very like it.

The countdown restarts, however, and the rocket lifts off – whereupon the Rani flees in her TARDIS. The Doctor crosses his fingers, in the hope that the delay in the countdown will cause the rocket to miss the asteroid. Which it does. (Just.)

The Doctor prepares to return the genii to whence they came, telling Ikona he's not so sure that the Rani has escaped retribution... and he's right, for the Rani is now hanging suspended in her TARDIS, while Urak and the Tetraps plot their return to their homeworld, Tetrapyriarbus.

The story continues in the Bakers-authored spin-off audio *The Rani Reaps the Whirlwind* (BBV, 2000), with Kate O'Mara again playing the Rani and Anthony Keetch cast as Urak. Condemned to death on Tetrapyriarbus, the Rani learns that her sentence will only be commuted if she will put her skills into correcting a shortage of blood-food that threatens Urak's people...

The Doctor hands Ikona the flask taken from the lab, which contains the antidote to the killer insects' venom – which Ikona promptly pours away, believing that his people must meet their own challenges if they are to survive.

! ? Ikona's smashing of the antidote for the killer insects seems, on the face of it, insane. Just how many Lakertyan biologists with expertise in Time Lord-created alien insect venoms are there? Perhaps he just wants to stop the Lakertyans ever going back to the Centre of Leisure? Or does he want to galvanize them into action by presenting them with a seemingly insoluble problem?

Boarding the TARDIS, the Doctor promises his companion that she'll soon get used to his new form: "I'll grow on you, Mel. I'll grow on you!"

Additional material by James Beamish, Gareth Roberts and Clayton Hickman.

OFF THE SHELF

DVDs, BOOKS, CDs, TOYS: THE WORLD OF **DOCTOR WHO** IN REVIEW.

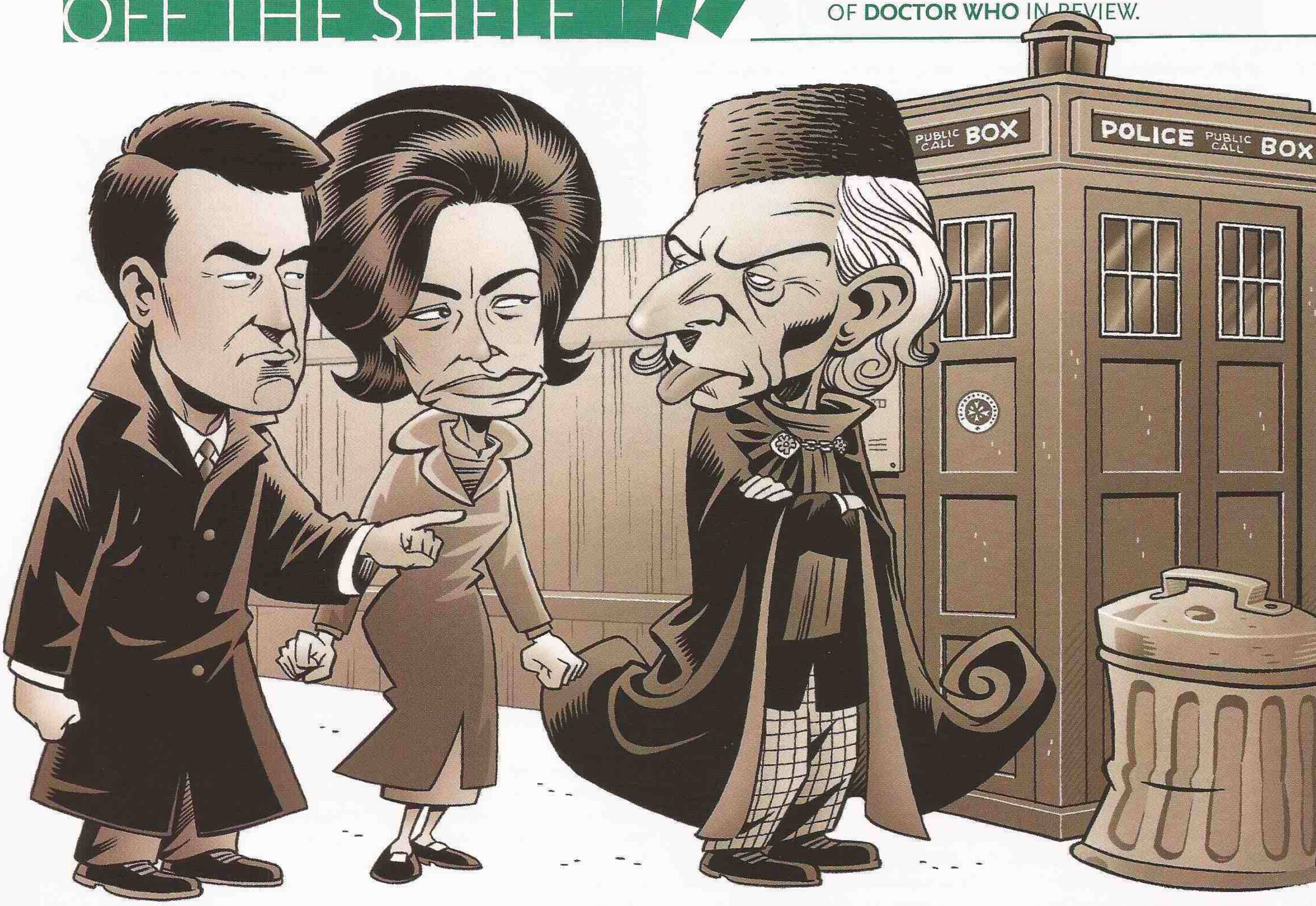


Illustration **ROGER LANGRIDGE**

DOCTOR WHO: THE BEGINNING

DVD BOX SET BBC DVD / 2 Entertain | **BY** Anthony Coburn, Terry Nation, David Whitaker | **PRICE** £29.99 | **OUT** Now

THERE ARE SOME OBVIOUS PARALLELS THAT can be drawn between *Doctor Who*'s original beginning and its re-launch last year. Both name their opening episode after one of the leads – *Rose* and *An Unearthly Child*, referring to the Doctor's granddaughter Susan – and both start off in the familiar setting of contemporary London. Unlike *Rose*, though, *An Unearthly Child* isn't told from the title character's point of view, so perhaps *An Unearthly Child* should've been called after Susan's schoolteachers, Ian and Barbara instead. Rose meets the Doctor, clocks he's a bit strange and goes on the internet for more information; Ian and Barbara can't make head nor tail of Susan and decide to follow her home and find out more from her grandfather – William Hartnell's mercurial First Doctor – and as with *Rose*, we don't see the inside of the TARDIS until Ian and Barbara tumble through its police box doors.

The Beginning has been appearing and disappearing from the schedules for some time – almost as if, with the new series' success, it didn't want to upset the apple-cart by launching a clutch of ancient black and white episodes that might put its new audience off. That, though, is unlikely, considering the excellence of the material on offer.

The Beginning is comprised of the series' first three serials – here billed under the 'umbrella' titles *An Unearthly Child*, *The Daleks* and *The Edge of Destruction* – plus the unedited pilot episode, with its different emphasis on the Doctor's background and a more alien Susan. The first episode, *An Unearthly Child*, and the Dalek episodes are the strongest, with *The Edge of Destruction* episodes the weakest, mainly because its TARDIS-in-crisis plot feels a bit directionless, as though it's being made up on the spot.

BBC DVD
DOCTOR WHO
THE BEGINNING
AN UNEARTHLY CHILD
THE DALEKS
THE EDGE OF DESTRUCTION

The often overlooked gems of the collection are the first story's caveman episodes. Despite producer Verity Lambert's worries over launching the series with actors scrabbling about in skins, the trip back to 100,000 BC provides a perfect illustration of the TARDIS' time-travelling capabilities. True, it may not be the most attention-grabbing of scripts and it's a shame the programme hadn't at this stage hit upon the idea of the TARDIS' translation powers (used so effectively in the present series) to smooth out the immediate strangeness of cavemen grunting English, but Anthony Coburn's simple story about the quest for fire supplies a surprising amount of drama as the Doctor, Susan, Ian and Barbara struggle to deal with their irrational and often violent captors. It's also very well made, with the limitations of Lime Grove's tiny studios disguised with some extremely effective sets, such as the claustrophobic, bone-ridden 'Cave of Skulls' and the believably dense and dangerous 'Forest of Fear'. Waris Hussein's direction is impressively fluid and much more inventive than might be expected for the time. The dissolves, flashbacks and voiceovers used in the first episode's classroom scenes feel remarkably modern and still stand out as unusual today. The only time things become a little unstuck is in the story's final dash back to the TARDIS where it's clear that the four time-travellers are simply running on the spot – a problem the Dalek story tries to solve ▶

◀ with revolving scenery but without much more success.

The second serial, *The Daleks*, is the most satisfying production of the set. Not only is it well directed and designed – the low-curved corridors of the Dalek city and the Daleks themselves – but it also has a strong story to go with it, that's both exciting and genuinely frightening, playing with Cold War fears of nuclear armageddon and the mutating effects of radiation. What stands out about these original Daleks is how they seem just as scared of the Thals and the TARDIS crew as they are of them. These Daleks are shown as rather nervous creatures, panicked into doing whatever it takes to survive. The regular cast again play their parts with complete conviction – the utter despair they show when they're held in the Dalek cell dying of radiation sickness is harrowing, and Ian and Barbara's arduous journey through Skaro's Lake of Mutations and mountains maintains the tension in the story's less Dalek-intensive second half. The story also makes good use of Carole Ann Ford's occasionally annoying Susan, sending her off on a solo mission to retrieve the anti-radiation drugs from the TARDIS.

Overall, *The Daleks* hardly makes a wrong move and despite its seven-episode length, Terry Nation's story never sags. The only slight disappointment comes right at the end, when the Thals' final attack on the Daleks isn't quite as slick or dramatic as you feel it should be.

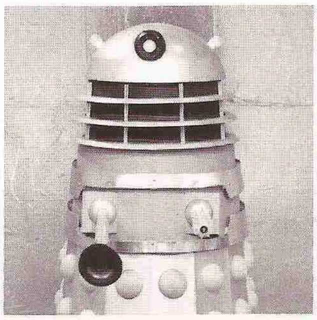
The problem with the third serial is that it simply isn't very convincing. David Whitaker's story revolves around the TARDIS heading back towards the Big Bang and trying to warn its occupants of the danger. The clues it gives, however, are so ambiguous and strange as to make practically no sense at all. The first half is the better, suggesting that some alien entity has got into the ship, making its occupants behave so oddly towards each other – Susan lashes out violently with a pair of scissors, while the Doctor accuses Ian and Barbara of sabotage. The second episode, however, is hampered by having to incorporate this behaviour as part of the TARDIS' bizarre warning system. The cause of the crisis, revealed to be the fault of a stuck switch – somewhat patronisingly explained on screen – is a let-down as well.

The Beginning's three stories sum up an image of *Doctor Who* that's clearly recognisable as the series that's still running today – the Doctor, the TARDIS, the Daleks, and episodes set in the past, present and future. The first two adventures are amongst the best the programme has ever offered – made with care, written and acted with intelligence and conviction by all concerned. Overall, these episodes are a triumph and the godfathers of all that has followed since.

> "These episodes are a real triumph and the godfathers of all that has followed since..."

DVD EXTRAS

'Triumph' is also a word to be applied to *The Beginning*'s 'Special Features'. Who would have thought that between the Ninth Doctor box-set [see **DWM** 364] and *The Beginning* that it would be the 42-year-old episodes that would inspire the more enjoyable and informative collection of extra material? In a package of five documentaries that include subjects such as the inside of the TARDIS, the Radiophonic Workshop and an in-depth look at the third serial, the 50-minute *Doctor Who: Origins* stands out for taking the series' long, complicated and often fraught genesis and presenting it in a way that's not only clear and orderly but also attractive and visually stimulating – scenes from the unbroadcast pilot episode with Sydney Newman's critical comments read over the top of them, plus footage of the lead actors in other roles and productions, are amongst the many clever ways it illustrates its story. This, like the similarly presented *Creation of the Daleks*, is slightly more reverential than some recent documentaries as befits the subject's importance, which isn't to say they aren't as entertaining or as opinionated – few people have anything kind to say about TARDIS set designer Peter Brachacki, for example, and Verity Lambert makes sure David Whitaker's contribution to Nation's Dalek script is fully understood.



▲ *The Daleks make their début...*

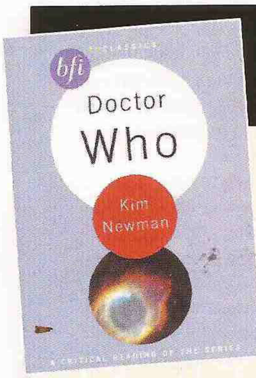
The disc's other major feature, a 30-minute audio and telesnap reconstruction of the 'missing' fourth adventure, *Marco Polo*, is a valiant attempt to breathe life back into the lost story, but despite being told at a breakneck pace, and boasting a lovely recreation of the original's animated route map, the format unfortunately struggles to hold one's interest.

Six episodes carry commentaries, with contributions from Carole Ann Ford and William Russell, Verity Lambert and directors Waris Hussein, Richard Martin and Christopher Barry. Those on the pilot and transmitted versions of *An Unearthly Child*, and *The Daleks*' second episode are the best, and underline the irony of a show that Sydney Newman dreamt of using the latest television technology actually being made with limited facilities in dilapidated studios.

If all that wasn't enough, other smaller delights include three comedy sketches from 1999's *Doctor Who Night* (*The Pitch of Fear* curtailed slightly to remove an offensive punch-line), a 5.1 mix of the original theme, and the complete original script of the pilot episode.

The Beginning is a treasure-trove for fans both old and new, but particularly the latter, who can learn more about the show's first steps from its excellent documentaries than most of us old-timers have in a lifetime.

VANESSA BISHOP



DOCTOR WHO

BOOK BFI Television Classics BY Kim Newman
PRICE £12 OUT Now

THIS IS A BOOK

I'd been looking forward to a very great deal. Author, fantasy historian and all round wonderfully keen and eccentric bod Kim Newman is somebody whose work I've admired from the numerous times I've seen him speak, through his career as the doyen of the talking-head documentary, to his wonderful novella *Time and Relative*. So – was I pleased with this academic-style attempt to set *Doctor Who* in popular culture context? By and large, yes, and his style gives a very readable product which conveys its points well... while the restrictions of the work unfortunately leaves one wanting more.

The trouble is, *Doctor Who* is a *big* topic, and much of this 'critical reading' of the series has been devoured laying down the ground rules before getting onto the subject. Newman clearly loves this series like his own offspring, which helps the flow enormously as he explains the impact the programme had on its first appearance, and then emphasises all the key stages in its development as it creates its own mythology and icons. This all jogs along very nicely, building upwards, until the arrival of K9 in 1977's *The Invisible Enemy*. This is where Newman declares that the show 'jumps the shark' and goes into decline, and so unfortunately the 1980s – notably the Colin Baker and Sylvester McCoy eras – get very short shrift as having little or no critical merit. While I don't agree at all with this rather polarised assessment, it doesn't detract from the study being a thought-provoking read, especially when the show is compared to other drama series.

Given the plethora of *Doctor Who* reference works on the market, it is unfortunate that at times Newman swoops down from his excellent bird's eye view of the series as a whole to study the minutiae of his subject where – occasionally – his research is less than thorough. A paragraph asserting that the character was only called 'Doctor Who' in comics and at the cinema misses out some key evidence from the show itself which the author seems unaware of. We have not one but two references to Major (rather than Colonel) Lethbridge-Stewart in text referring to *The Web of Fear*. I can generally live with all this, but other errors – such as the claim that Totter's Lane of *An Unearthly Child* pre-dates Oil Drum Lane of *Steptoe and Son* – mean that an otherwise well argued point ends up in an embarrassing mess because the fundamental facts are askew.

While the assessment may short change fans of the 1980s (and is supplemented by an episode guide with some highly irregular regular cast), it's an extremely pleasing read and helps prove my own belief that most people's view of *Doctor Who* is measured against their first experience of it. A bit over-priced for such a slim volume, it is certainly the best work of its kind that I've come across and it conveys its perspective in an entertaining manner. It would be wonderful to see a longer version allowing Newman to study the subject matter in more detail.

ANDREW PIXLEY

OTHER LIVES

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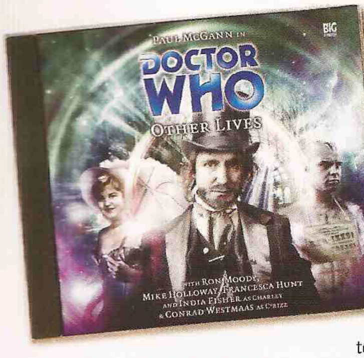

PAUL McGANN IN
DOCTOR WHO
OTHER LIVES
BIG
WITH RON MOODY, MIKE HOLLOWAY, FRANCESCA HUNT
AND INDIA FISHER AS CHARLEY
& CONRAD WESTMAAS AS C'RIZZ

OTHER THAN FEATURING THE same TARDIS crew as his earlier Big Finish audio, and the author's wordiness, *Other Lives* has little in common with Gary Hopkins' previous play, *The Last*. Taking Charley to visit the 1851 Great Exhibition at the Crystal Palace, the TARDIS crew is caught up with the revolutionary politics of the time. In its two hours-plus running time, Charley is mistaken for a harlot, throws herself at the mercy of the Duke of Wellington, and impersonates a missing French aristocrat. C'rizz is kidnapped, stripped, chained up and tormented as Ker-izzo the lizard man in a freaks show, and the Doctor has to come to terms with a woman who apparently believes him to be her missing husband, the father of her children. Meanwhile, the TARDIS has disappeared along with the Deroches, French aristocrats living in London.

> "*Other Lives* is saved by the engaging characters, brought so vividly to life by the cast."

▲ *Actors Ron Moody and India Fisher.*

The main problem with *Other Lives* is that it's unnecessarily long. The opening scenes at the Crystal Palace go on forever without particularly advancing the story, Charley's adventures with Dimplesqueeze don't add very much, and it generally takes a long time to get to the point of any scene. Whilst one could charitably ascribe this to Hopkins' desire to write a typically labyrinthine Dickensian yarn, there are too few characters and events to realise this. Instead the play has an echoing, empty feel, with none of the colourful bustle and thick fug of Dickens' work.

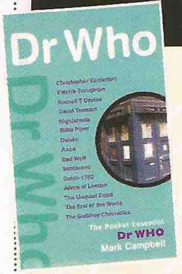
The play is saved, however, by Hopkins' engaging characters, brought so vividly to life by the cast. Mike Holoway impresses most as the vicious Jacob Crackles, the cheeky Cockney wide-boy masking a vicious thug who brutalises his troupe of freaks to keep them in line. His Tod Browning-esque fate is entirely in keeping with his charmless and cruel behaviour. Ron Moody is also great value for money as the decrepit Duke of Wellington, who still has a core of iron and will do anything to prevent his country from falling into anarchy. Along with Michael Hobbs as Wellington's fey assistant, Fazackerley, and Francesca Hunt as the desperate Georgina Marlow, Gary Russell has assembled a strong cast.

The regulars also perform creditably, with India Fisher and Conrad Westmaas apparently doubling up as the French aristocrats, and then having to impersonate themselves, a fact to which the script seems to allude with a snigger. Paul McGann gets some decent scenes as a Doctor confronted with the possibility that he has a family. His reaction is to try to flee as quickly as possible – pretty consistent given he once dumped his granddaughter on the first man who'd take her. All this sits comfortably with the play's theme of posing as things that we're not – Dimplesqueeze is apparently a Victorian gentleman but one who consorts with tarts, the Doctor must pose as Edward Marlow, Charley and C'rizz as the French aristocrats and even Wellington choosing different titles to suit. Whether or not this sheds new light on the hypocrisy of Victorian England is open to question. *Other Lives* is entertaining enough, but it's also overlong and slight, and doesn't really compare to Hopkins' previous audio.

MATT MICHAEL

THE POCKET ESSENTIAL DR WHO

BOOK Pocket Essentials
WRITER Mark Campbell **PRICE** £4.99



THE FIRST EDITION OF MARK CAMPBELL'S 2000-PUBLISHED *Pocket Essential Doctor Who* saw the author proclaiming in his introduction that *Doctor Who* was dead, that it would never be coming back, and that we were all deluding ourselves in the vague hope that it might be. This updated edition, then, finds Campbell sheepishly eating his words in an altogether more enthusiastic introduction.

The format remains unchanged from the first edition, namely, television stories are dealt with in brief production details and concluded with a verdict and rating out of ten. Audio, books and other spin-offs are also covered, with BBCi webcasts making up some of the new material. Of course, the book's main draw is the addition of the 2005 series, which the author refers to as 'Season 27'. Overall, Campbell's prone to be a bit grumpy about things, tarnishing very positive comments with strange niggles – high scorers like *Rose*, for example, where he begins enthusing over its bright, fast-moving style but criticises the use of the Autons as 'a cynical marketing exercise'. This is nothing, however, to what he dishes out to stories he really doesn't like, panning *The End of the World* for unconvincing aliens and terrible incidental music, and awarding *Boom Town* a miserly one out of ten for its 'terrible comedy' and for being 'dire from beginning to end'. The only other TV story that equals this low in the entire book is *The Monster of Peladon* – and only because it lacks everything that made its top-scoring prequel, *The Curse of Peladon*, 'so wonderful'.

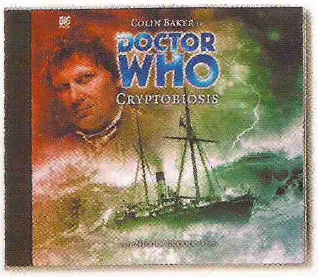
Of the ten new stories, two – *The Unquiet Dead* and *The Empty Child/The Doctor Dances* – secure the golden 'ten out of ten', putting them on par with, amongst others, the 'flawless' *City of Death*, the 'near-perfect' *The Caves of Androzani* and the 'bed-wettingly terrifying' *Fury from the Deep*. Steven Moffat's Blitz story is praised in particular for providing the 'twists' and 'shock moments' Campbell bemoans are missing from the latest series in his introduction.

Occasionally over-critical, the updated Pocket Essential is nevertheless handy for new fans as easy reference to episodes old and new.

VANESSA BISHOP

CRYPTOBIOSIS

AUDIO DRAMA Big Finish | **BY** Elliot Thorpe | **PRICE** Free to Big Finish subscribers | **OUT** Now



TRAVELLING TO NEW ORLEANS aboard the steamship Lankester, the Sixth Doctor and Peri are very quickly embroiled in a murder, an attempted murder, and the false imprisonment of a young woman. Par for the course so far, but further investigation reveals a hitherto unsuspected twist that could condemn a whole race of people.

Given away free to subscribers of the *Doctor Who* range, these Big Finish 'loyalty' CDs are one of the few opportunities to hear Colin Baker and Nicola Bryant together. *Cryptobiosis*, like the previous freebie *Her Final Flight*, has a mellower, fruitier Sixth Doctor, more tolerant of his young companion. Nicola Bryant's Peri is in classic mode, however, nipping at the Doctor and bawling at anyone who crosses her. But Peri's real ire is saved for those who have imprisoned her new friend Amy, and who are shamelessly planning to exploit her once the Lankster reaches New Orleans. Taking centre stage, Bryant puts passion into her performance, and her scenes with Naomi Paxton's pained Amy provide plenty of heartstring-tugging high emotion.

Sadly, though, *Cryptobiosis* suffers similar flaws to *Her Final Flight*. Running just over three quarters of an hour, there's still a sense that there isn't really enough plot. After a portentous start and a couple of revelations midway through, the play drags to an inevitable climax that's only enlivened by some vintage mad laughter from the cracked villain. With a tiny cast, scene transitions like something off Radio 4, and a largely dour script, this is the equivalent of one of those short films that used to make up the cinema bill during the early 1980s. By no means a washout, *Cryptobiosis* is nevertheless a bit of a damp squib.

MATT MICHAEL

DOCTOR WHO: CLASSIFIED! / TARDIS MANUAL / QUIZ BOOK

ACTIVITY BOOKS Penguin Group/BBC Children's Books | **BY** Stephen Cole
PRICES £4.99 (*Classified!*)/£3.99 (*TARDIS Manual*)/£3.99 (*Quiz Book*) | **OUT** Now

THE SECOND WAVE OF activity-based releases from Penguin and BBC Children's Books, issued late last year, boldly retain Christopher Eccleston's image as the Doctor. As before, they're aimed at ages 7-12 but have a certain colourful, old Annual charm that might appeal to older fans.

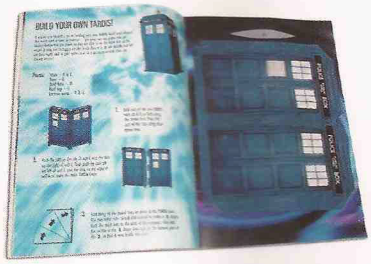
Of the three books, *Classified! A Confidential 3-D Dossier* offers the most instant thrills with the inclusion of a pair of 3-D glasses to view the 'top-secret spy-cam composite pictures' scattered throughout the book. Once you've wowed at the space shot of Platform One (it really does look like you can see around and down into it!), the book becomes a standard, page-by-page episode guide disguised as an official UNIT document, importantly emblazoned with 'Top Secret' warnings and advising only those with 'full security privileges, an inquiring mind and a strong stomach' to read on.

The *TARDIS Manual*, with its 'Press-out and Make TARDIS' [pictured right], is a more compact and slightly simpler version of the *Build the TARDIS book* that appeared in the late 1980s. The attraction here is obvious and if Santa hadn't brought me my spanky brand new voice-activated money-box TARDIS this Christmas, this cardboard version would've been pressed out and made on Boxing Day.

The first question to be asked of the *Quiz Book* is 'Is it hard?' Well, yes and no. Of its 280 categories and 250 plus questions, most are multiple choice or 'True or False'. No-one, I'm sure, will be struggling with easy fare such as 'What is Rose's surname?' (Wyler, Tyler or Smiler?) but play without the answer options and some questions become a little trickier *eg* 'What happens if a Slitheen child fails to carry out its first kill?' On the other hand, ending the reasonably testing *Quality Quotations* round with "Who said 'Exterminate'?" is having a laugh, even without the a, b or c options.

> "Although aimed at ages 7-12, these books have a charm that might appeal to older fans..."

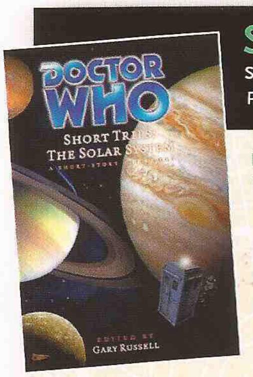
Like the personal lifestyle tests found in women's magazines (Is your man right for you? Bo-ho or hobo?), *Could you be... the Doctor?* and *What are you like?* test your mettle as a potential Doctor or companion. Appropriately, the final *What are you like?* question tips headlong into *Marie-Claire* territory: 'The Doctor takes you to the planet Woman Wept, where the beaches are a thousand miles across, and where frozen waves a hundred feet high rise up from the endless ocean. Do you: (a) Walk with the Doctor at midnight, enjoying the moment, knowing it will stay with you forever? (b) Hold a beach party and get out the barbecue (c) Faint.' Hmmm...



The book's toughest test, however, is its *Mega Challenge* – 30 questions which it dares you (impossibly, I might add) to complete in three minutes. If you do well, the book cheekily accuses you of cheating and having an info-spike planted in your head!

VANESSA BISHOP

SHORT TRIPS: THE SOLAR SYSTEM



SHORT STORY COLLECTION Big Finish | **EDITED BY** Gary Russell
PRICE £14.99 | **OUT** Now

BIG FINISH DOES HOLST. In this new collection of short stories, perhaps surprisingly, for the most part the authors choose not to base their tales around the themes associated with each planet: Venus – love, Mars – war and so forth. And, unlike many of the previous anthologies in this series, there is no grand unifying storyline that links the ten tales together. Instead, each story opts to be a miniature *Doctor Who* adventure, dispensing with literary pretensions and going straight for the pulpy style of those 1950s' sci-fi anthologies.

Eddie Robson's *Mercury* is one of the stories that breaks the mould and is themed around communication, appropriate for the messenger planet. Featuring the Second Doctor arriving on a travelling dome under attack from odd, silvery beings, it's a decent opener, with some entertaining moments. *Venus*, by Stuart Manning, sees the Eighth Doctor and Charley arriving on the beautiful yet deadly planet in time to see an incredible artistic installation. The melancholy tone and bittersweet ending mark this out as one of the more successful stories in the collection.

Earth gets novella-length treatment in Jim Mortimore's tale of warring ant colonies in the distant future. Fully embracing the pulp style, this has more than a touch of Lovecraftian wonder as the narrator and the Fourth Doctor are herded into the underground colony of the ants. More expansive and richer than the other stories in the anthology, the downside is that the whole thing is told in thick New York patois which makes it hard going at times. There's a reason why the TARDIS translates into English. Persevere, though, and it is the most rewarding tale.

Mars is a pretty slim tale of Steven Taylor inspiring a crash-landed alien to choose life. *Jupiter*, which suffers from some poor expository writing that tells us what to think about the characters rather than letting us draw our own conclusions, is nevertheless an okay entry, though it won't be remembered. *Saturn* is likewise a fairly bland proposition, which fits with the theme of a sterile utopia that's founded on the old and the young being held outside the colony, allowing the feckless in-between folk to live out their soulless lives. Craig Hinton's *Uranus* passes the time, but doesn't really seem to be about anything in particular. Having the Seventh Doctor and Mel indirectly topple a bid for dictatorship from Mavic Chen's grandson is fine in principle, but when there's apparently nothing to choose between that and the rife corruption of the current system there's not much punch to the tale.

The final three stories are an improvement, with *Neptune* and *Sedna* forming a well-written if inconsequential diptych about the Third Doctor, Sarah Jane and Jeremy encountering art-loving aliens at war over their future. *Pluto* is a *Forbidden Planet*-type tale of an imprisoned monster haunting the Second Doctor that focuses on Ben's suspicion of the newly-regenerated Time Lord.

The Solar System is typical of the *Short Trips* anthologies. There are some decent stories mixed in with bland filler material that makes this book an agreeable diversion, but nothing more.

MATT MICHAEL DWM

IT'S... THE CHRISTMAS QUIZ RESULTS

IT'S TIME TO SEE HOW WELL YOU DID IN THE WATCHER'S CHRISTMAS QUIZ FROM **DWM 364...**

MANY THANKS TO ALL OF YOU who entered our Christmas Quiz in DWM 364. We had such a massive response that the Watcher has been spending the last few weeks sifting through all the entries, and his bypass is getting a little cluttered! As soon as he's worked out which five readers scored the most correct answers (with extra points for style!), the prizes will be on their way.

Meanwhile, let's not dilly-dally any further, and reveal the solutions...

BLIND DATES

1 6 March 2005 (*Aliens of London*).

APPEAL FOR ASSISTANCE
CAN YOU HELP?
Have you seen Rose Tyler ?

2 The New Roman Empire (*The End of the World*).
3 Satellite 5 began broadcasting (*The Long Game*).
4 The Great Atlantic Smog Storm (*Bad Wolf*).
5 Three inches of steel around the cabinet room in 10 Downing Street (*World War Three*).

FAMOUS LAST WORDS

6 De Maggio (*Dalek*).
7 The Editor (*The Long Game*).
8 Lynda (*The Parting of the Ways*).
9 Sneed (*The Unquiet Dead*).
10 The Moxx of Balhoon (*The End of the World*).

CONNECTIONS

11 They are the only companions whose fathers we meet on screen (in *Planet of Fire* we meet Peri's step-father; and, incidentally, another thing the fathers have in common is that they all die – siring the Doctor's companions is a high-risk business!).
12 They all emerged from the river Thames (in, respectively, *The Dalek Invasion of Earth*, *Terror of the Zygons*, *The Pescatons* and *Aliens of London*).
13 They are the only characters ever to have survived being shot by the Daleks (in, respectively, *Planet of the Daleks*, *The Daleks*, *Genesis of the Daleks*, *Revelation of the Daleks* [in which both Orcini and Bostock survive Dalek blasts but subsequently die anyway] and *The Parting of the Ways*).
14 They all nearly started World War Three (as we learn in, respectively, *Dalek* [when Adam was eight years old], *World War Three* and *Day of the Daleks*); whereas, in *Father's Day*, Rose claims that her father is 'not going to start World War Three.'
15 They are among the characters who have asked the question 'Doctor who?' (Viewers of *The Christmas Invasion* will have noticed we can now also add Jackie Tyler to the list!)

FAMOUS FIRST WORDS

16 *The Reign of Terror.*
17 *Four to Doomsday.*
18 *Dalek.*
19 *The Robots of Death.*
20 *Terror of the Autons.*

DESTINATION UNKNOWN

21 *Horror of Fang Rock* (he successfully reaches Brighton in *The Leisure Hive*, but misses the opening of the Pavilion).

22 *The Unquiet Dead.*
23 *Time-Flight.*
24 *The Moonbase.*
25 *The Mark of the Rani.*

BRIEF ENCOUNTERS

26 *Aliens of London.*
27 *The Android Invasion* (Bell is also discussed – and heard – in *Father's Day*, but the Doctor doesn't mention meeting him).
28 *Rose.*
29 *Logopolis.*
30 *The Power of Kroll.*

POPPING THE QUESTION

31 *The Evil of the Daleks.*
32 *Father's Day.*
33 *Revelation of the Daleks.*
34 *Remembrance of the Daleks* (a cover version recorded by incidental musician Keff McCulloch also features in *Delta and the Bannermen*, but the authentic Mudlarks version is heard on the jukebox in *Remembrance*).
35 *Aliens of London.*

ANAGRAMS

36 *The Parting of the Ways.*
37 *The Celestial Toymaker.*
38 *The Greatest Show in the Galaxy.*
39 *The Sontaran Experiment.*
40 *The Dalek Invasion of Earth.*

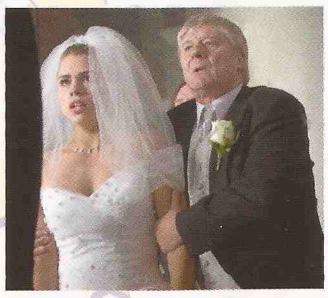
SOMETHING OLD, SOMETHING NEW

41 In *The Invasion of Time*, on finding Borusa reading a 1912 newspaper report about the sinking of the Titanic, the Doctor says "I had nothing to do with this, I promise you." But in *Rose* we learn that the Ninth Doctor had something to do with the Daniels family's last-minute decision not to board the Titanic, and in *The End of the World* he tells Jabe that he was once on board a ship that sounds suspiciously familiar ("unsinkable; I ended up clinging to an iceberg – it wasn't half cold").
42a Both describe twentieth-century pop hits as 'classical music' (for Vicki in *The Chase* it's the Beatles' *Ticket to Ride*, and for Cassandra in *The End of the World* it's Soft Cell's *Tainted Love*).
b Futuristic deserts: Cassandra's mother was born in 'the Arctic desert', while in *Ghost Light* the Doctor paraphrases Douglas Adams' famous tea leaf/East India Company quip by observing that Josiah knows as much 'as a hamburger knows about the Amazon desert'.

43a After leaving Las Cadenas (the restaurant in *The Two Doctors*), the Doctor vows to become a vegetarian; but he has broken the pledge by the time he sits down to dine at Bistro 10 (the restaurant in *Boom Town*), where he orders steak and chips.
b In *Invasion of the Dinosaurs* he is seen spooning four sugars into his tea; but in *The Unquiet Dead* Gwyneth knows that he takes just two.
44 The difference is 1600 Daleks: in *Remembrance of the Daleks*, the Doctor says a mother ship can contain up to 400 Daleks; in *Bad Wolf*, he says each ship holds 2000 Daleks.
45 Their convenient proximity to Plymouth. (In *Aliens of London*, Mickey locates HMS Taurean 10 miles off the coast near Plymouth; and under attack by the globulin-sucking Ogri in *The Stones of Blood*, Martha recommends Plymouth as the nearest safe haven).

AND FINALLY...

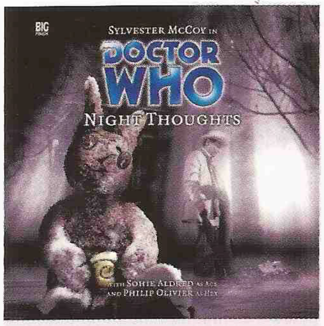
46a Christopher Eccleston, Sam Kelly and Jenny Laird all feature in the 1991 *Inspector Morse* episode *Second Time Around.*
b Christopher Eccleston and David Tennant both appear in the 1996 film *Jude.*
c David Tennant, Roger Lloyd-Pack and Jeff Rawle appear in the 2005 film *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire.*
d David Tennant, Geoffrey Palmer, Philip Madoc and Anna-Louise Plowman appear in the 2004 BBC serial *He Knew He Was Right.*
e David Tennant, Jim Broadbent, Richard E Grant and Mark Gatiss appear in the 2003 film *Bright Young Things*, directed by Stephen Fry.
f Billie Piper, Patrick Ryecart, Derek Riddell and Martin Jarvis appear in the BBC's 2005 retelling of *Much Ado About Nothing.*



g Billie Piper, Jonathan Pryce and Denis Lill appear in the 1996 film *Evita.*
h John Barrowman, Jonathan Pryce and Kevin McNally appear in the 2004 film *De-Lovely.*
i Noel Clarke, Sylvia Syms, Brian Croucher and Mark Hardy appear in the 2003 film *I'll Sleep When I'm Dead.*
47 Barbara's erstwhile paramour the Emperor Nero (54-68 AD) gives the clue – they all share their names with Roman Emperors: Nerva (96-98), Magnus Maximus (383-388), Marius (Gallic Emperor in 269), and Constantine (306-337).
48 5+4 = 50, which is what Cassandra claims was the wingspan of an ostrich in *The End of the World.*
49 The answer is Raffalo. (37,166 – (2.20 x 802 x 15) + 500) ÷ 200 = 56. Or, to put it another way: 2.20 credits (*The Long Game*) times Room 802 (*The Empty Child*) times the Freedom 15 (*The Long Game*), subtracted from 37,166 (*Planet of Evil*), plus Floor 500 (*The Long Game*) divided by 200 (*The Long Game*) equals Complex 56 – which is where Raffalo comes from (*The End of the World*).
50a *The Unquiet Dead.*
b *The Curse of Peladon* and *The Monster of Peladon.*
c *The Daleks' Master Plan: The Feast of Steven.*
d *K9 and Company.*
e *The Unquiet Dead* again ('God bless us, every one!' is of course the closing line of *A Christmas Carol*). DWM

AUDIO ADVENTURES

PREVIEWS OF THE LATEST **DOCTOR WHO** AUDIO DRAMAS



AUDIO DRAMA Big Finish
RELEASED February 2006
FEATURING The Seventh Doctor, Ace and Hex
SETTING Highland Scotland, the present day.

STARRING

The Doctor	SYLVESTER McCOY
Ace	SOPHIE ALDRED
Hex	PHILIP OLIVIER
Major Dickens	BERNARD KAY
The Bursar	JOANNA McCALLUM
Dr O'Neil	ANDREW FORBES
Sue	LIZZIE HOPLEY
The Deacon	ANN BEACH
Joe Hartley	DUNCAN DUFF

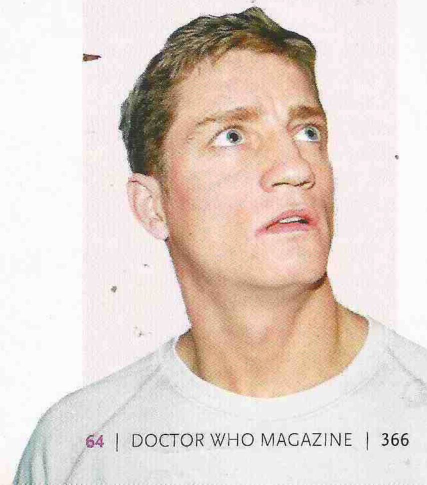
DIRECTOR: Gary Russell

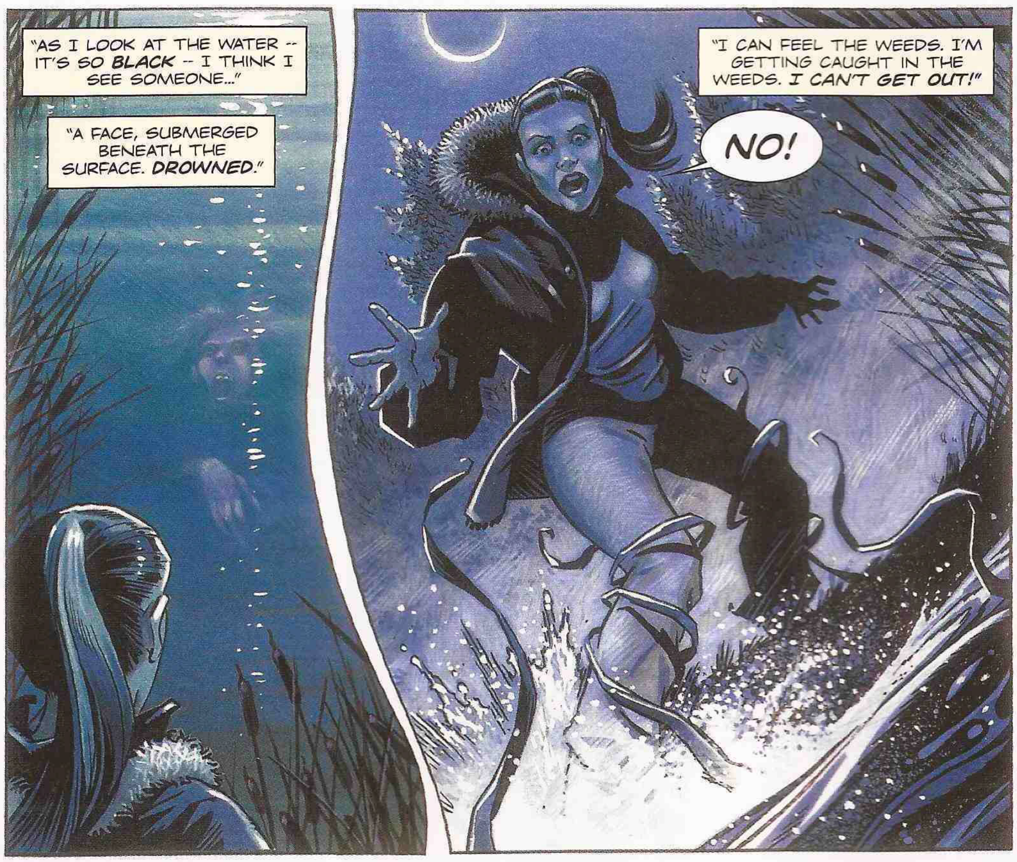
Each winter, at a remote Scottish mansion, a motley group of academics gathers at the instruction of former medic Major Dickens. But what disastrous experiment are they commemorating? What was the consequence of their actions? When the TARDIS lands nearby on a dark and stormy night, the Doctor and his companions must take refuge in what rapidly becomes a house of horrors. But who is intent on eliminating the house guests – and why won't a body stay where it lies?

▶ *This page: Bernard Kay marks his fifth Doctor Who role – and his first for 35 years!*

▶ *Facing page: The Night Thoughts cast at Big Finish's recording studio.*

▼ *Companion Hex (Philip Olivier).*




"AS I LOOK AT THE WATER -- IT'S SO BLACK -- I THINK I SEE SOMEONE..."
"A FACE, SUBMERGED BENEATH THE SURFACE. DROWNED."
"I CAN FEEL THE WEEDS. I'M GETTING CAUGHT IN THE WEEDS. I CAN'T GET OUT!"
NO!

NIGHT THOUGHTS

Written by EDWARD YOUNG | Preview by MARK WYMAN | Illustration by MARTIN GERAGHTY

THERE'S A DEFINITE WHIFF OF resurrection in the air with the macabre *Night Thoughts*, a *Doctor Who* story first pitched for TV production way back in the Old Time… well, 1989, actually. That fact marks quite a significant departure for Big Finish.

"I'd always said we *wouldn't* be recording unmade TV scripts," producer-director Gary Russell reminds us, "but when Ed Young sent me his first episode about two years ago – just asking if it was any use – I thought it was superb." What appealed about this self-contained chiller, Gary? "It mixes the feel of *Ghost Light* (1989) and a base-under-siege story from Patrick Troughton's era."

Edward Young explains why such a fine vintage is only now being uncorked. "I wrote *Night Thoughts* in early 1989 for (then-script editor) Andrew Cartmel. He liked it and kindly spent an age suggesting changes, but after the BBC cancelled the series, I boxed up the script and put it in my attic. That's where I stumbled across it a year or so ago."

DWM mentioned Young's story in a feature, *27 Up* [**DWM** 255], covering the scripts that Cartmel had earmarked for production in the 1990s, but otherwise Young's story remained buried. "When originally writing it," recalls Young, "I was probably also penning jokes for a satirical comedy series. Hopefully the humour in *Night Thoughts* lightens what would otherwise be quite a bleak little tale."

Curiously, this isn't the first artistic work called *Night Thoughts* to be penned by an Edward Young. A celebrated meditative poem with that title was written around 1740 by a namesake of Big Finish's latest playwright. Was that his deliberate starting-point, since the poem and audio both pivot around the fate of a mother and her daughter? "A good question!" concedes Young. "In terms of the mother/daughter inspiration you're probably right. Having settled on the title, I wanted to draw something from the original poem. But my starting point was a desire to write a good old-fashioned winter ghost story, drawing from all sorts of horror that I'd read as a child."

What did reworking it into an audio drama involve? "Ed offered to let someone else turn it into an audio," Gary recalls, "but in all honesty I wanted him to rewrite it, and having found all the scripts he wanted to have a go. It took a lot of work – we went through two or three drafts – but Ed was really amenable."

CYBERMAN:

PART 4: TELOS

CD | BIG FINISH | £10.99 | OUT NOW

The unmissable final instalment of Big Finish's Cyberman audio series, written and directed by Nicholas Briggs.

"Being picky about what commissions I take on nowadays," Young confides, "I wrongly thought that transposing the television script into audio would be a speedy task. It wasn't, especially as I had to insert the character of Hex," – the Seventh Doctor's new(ish) audio companion. "But I'm pleased that almost all my original storyline has survived, with 80 per cent of the dialogue – even if some is said by different characters."

Although the TV script had more characters, the role of Major Dickens proved indispensable. Playing him is Bernard Kay, making his first *Doctor Who* appearance since playing Caldwell in *Colony in Space* (1971). What did Kay make of his revival character? "Well, Dickens says that he was an anaesthetist in the army. There's something quite incongruous about him, which is interesting to play; he's an old-fashioned army officer type but, equally, a total scoundrel. He's out to make his name through a gruesome kind of immortality, with shallow graves... I really felt quite queasy when I read the ending. If it were visual, there'd be people hiding behind the sofa!"

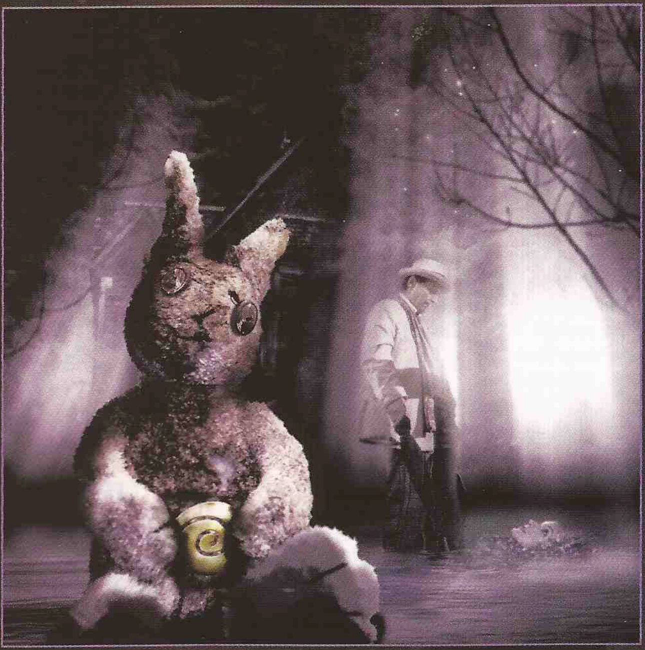
> "I thought that transposing the television script into audio would be a speedy task... It wasn't!"

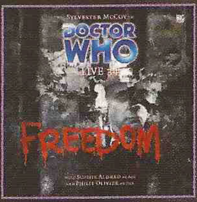
What did Kay recall about working with the First Doctor, from playing Tyler in *The Dalek Invasion of Earth* (1964) and Saladin in *The Crusade* (1965)? "Bill Hartnell was then one of our finest character actors; maybe he was feeling a bit jaded professionally, but people loved him. Looking back at some DVDs, he was really effective; that world-weariness was his trademark. We had no idea we were creating a cult then. I'm still not sure how it acquired its almost mystical status. It was just a job which working actors like myself did; on (long-running police series) *Z Cars*, I think I had seven different roles!

"It was lovely to play Saladin next. But Pat Troughton," who Kay appeared with in *The Faceless Ones* (1967), "was my favourite Doctor. He had the flexibility of an ordinary man who happened to be a time traveller. Like Chris Eccleston recently, he went for the humanity and let the mystique look after itself."

Back with adapting *Night Thoughts*, Gary has a few small regrets: "Some beautiful visual things had to go; early on, when Ace falls into a lake, what she sees there was an ongoing theme." That's still among the story's unsettling elements – along with the toy rabbit seen on the CD cover and a stuffed bear. Young agrees. "They're both pretty scary in my play; too scary for 1980s *Doctor Who* and more at home with the darker tone of some of the current series; rather like crossing The One With Charles Dickens and The One With The Gas Masks."

It's been a wonderful and strange year for *Doctor Who*. Is that how Young felt at having his story recorded at last? "Yes, it's apt that it should finally be done in 2005, of all years!" DWM





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PRODUCTION NOTES

GO BEHIND THE SCENES WITH **RUSSELL T DAVIES!**

PHIL'S SPACE

PHIL COLLINSON. LET'S TALK PHIL! In fact, let's stalk him. Cos I don't think you hear enough about Phil, the Producer of *Doctor Who*. Julie and I mostly spend our time in our various offices, so you get to hear a fair bit from us, cos we're available for the odd interview, or the very odd column, while Phil is usually stuck in an abandoned paper mill, soldering on Cybermen's heads, kicking a budget out of the window, and injecting adrenaline into a Director (and somehow, moving flats at the same time). So let's follow Phil for a day. Stalk with me! And I'm going to choose an ordinary day; some days are special, with explosions and stunts and anecdotes-for-evermore, with Ben Cook scribbling away in the corner, but let's look at an unexceptional 24 hours, and see what Phil gets up to. (Well, slightly censored, sorry boys.) Like all good stories, it starts at night...

23:00, Friday 6 January. Soho. Late at night, here's Phil, staggering out of the Mill. It was only meant to be a quick afternoon visit, but as ever, the list of things to be done just grew and grew until he's got to stay overnight. He's been overseeing the final grade and FX for *New Earth*, and like every Episode 1, it just needs that little bit extra. So Phil sat there and shaved three seconds off a dying [1], added more ugly [2] to a poor [3], and stopped a digital [4] from accidentally moving. (These mysterious bracketed numbers will be decoded for you in, ooh, a few months.) That done, Phil heads off into the night, to Any Old Hotel, booked at the last minute, ready for...

07:00, Saturday 7 January. Up, packed, gone, off to Paddington for the train. And already, the phone calls are coming in, cos the unit's working today, in Mount Stuart Square, Cardiff. With filming starting at 08:30, Phil's got a couple of hours spare on the train. But he's got to read scripts; Episodes 7 and 11 are due to be published on Monday – the final draft, for the cast and crew – so there are last minute thoughts and revisions to be phoned through to the Script Editors. 'Cut the [5] and give the [6] some lines!' Alongside that, casting thoughts to be sent to Andy Pryor, schedules for the last remaining Blocks, for Series Three, for [7]. He's a blizzard of paper.

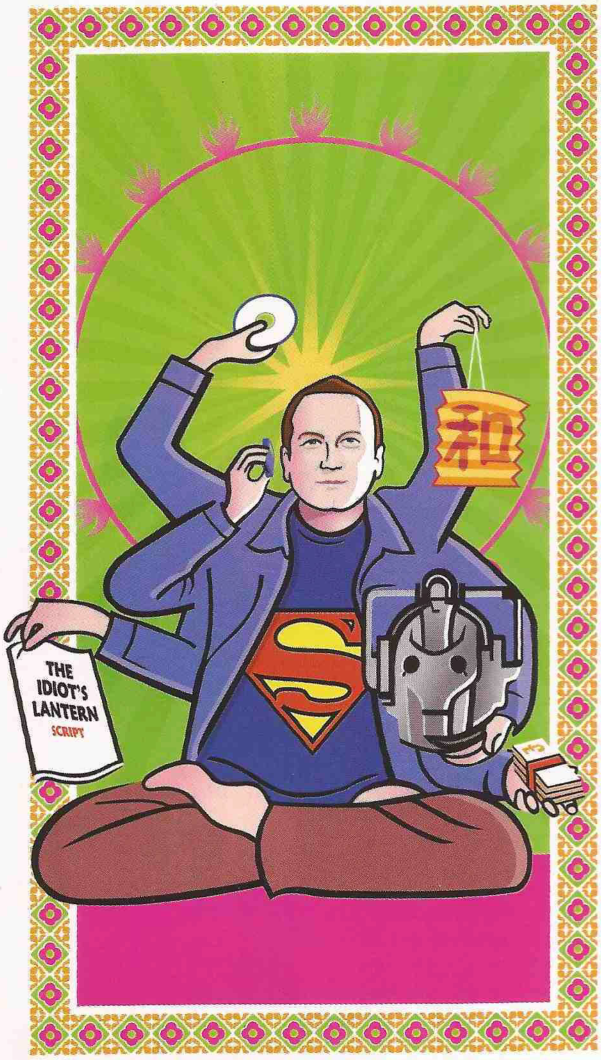

Illustration **BEN MORRIS**

> "YOU DON'T HEAR ENOUGH ABOUT PHIL – SO LET'S STALK HIM!"

09:30. Phil's on set. Into the portable office, parked beside Asda. Mayhem! There's Steff, the Second AD, marshalling today's 38 extras (30 Crowd, 6 Soldiers, 2 Policemen), Susie the First AD asking about the future production of [8], Tim checking the road closure – those are real police, not extras! – Lowri the Location Manager saying that next Friday's hangar has fallen through, Tracie the Production Manager asking about Block Four... All packed into a small portakabin, overlapping, criss-crossing, underheated. It would take a Director a whole day to rehearse this scene.

11.00. Out in the Square, with the Doctor and Rose discovering something mysterious about the Cybus Corporation. Filming has to stop as a tall, handsome and ineffably elegant man wanders into shot. It's me! Ha ha! Fresh from the jacuzzi (I was able to write the above paragraphs by remote viewing, travelling on the Astral Plane). I notice that there seems to be more than the usual amount of onlookers, even for a Saturday. Phil wonders why, asks around. It turns out that all the local householders and shopkeepers were leafleted, as normal, with advance warning of "a popular drama series" filming in the area. Nice and discreet. And at the top of the letter? The TARDIS. Hmm, wonder which popular series that is, then? Fifty-three different reactions cross Phil's face. Then he chooses the best one; he laughs.

13:00. Lunch, nice bit of cod, farewells to David and Billie – they've finished for the day – but a phonecall for Phil. A copy of *The Idiot's Lantern* has been found on a park bench in London! A kindly soul has phoned, to hand it in! But how, why, where, when? Phil disappears into a blizzard of phonecalls.

16:00. The sun's setting, just right for the chilling events of Scene 6/05a. Graeme Harper's in his element, with a camera-crane, all those extras, a car, spooky lighting, all cued up (and that's all part of Phil's job too, every object and person costed and fought over and balanced against every other episode). And while Phil's running to and fro – helping Lowri with that problem next week, changing the shooting order of Series Three with me – he's watching the monitor at the same time. Phil stops the shot. A window's unlit. Can we get some lamps in, quickly? Heads huddle, Phil, Design, Graeme, Susie, sparks – the window's the front of a bar, but Design have put a Chinese takeaway sign outside – if it's lit, will it look like a Chinese bar? Is that odd? All fast and muttered, time is money. Eventually, Phil decides: the scene's set in London. If anyone's got a Chinese bar, it's London! Off they go again – but again, Phil says stop! Now it's lit, the Chinese bar looks empty. Two men are sent to sit inside. So now it's a gay Chinese bar. Six takes, and that's a wrap!

18:00. Back home, but the work doesn't stop. *The Satan Pit* to read, Directors' showreels to watch, Murray's sent the music for *New Earth* (the final mix is on Monday), more FX sequences from *School Reunion* to be analysed. And so...

23:00. A full 24 hours after this account started, I get a final text from Philippo. He's watching yesterday's rushes, late on a Saturday night. 'Isn't the [9] of [10] brilliant? My favourite scene!'
I text back. 'Phil, it's almost midnight. Just [11] [12].' And so to bed.

That's just one little slice of a life. A diary that busy could be written for every member of the crew. Amazing people, brilliant work, with Phil Collinson in charge of it all. My producer, my friend, and a hero of mine. DWM

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